









**THE INDIAN  
ANNUAL REGISTER**



# THE INDIAN ANNUAL REGISTER

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# **CHRONICLE OF EVENTS**

**JANUARY—JUNE 1936**



# Chronicle of Events

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## JANUARY 1936

**1st. Split in the Hindu Mahasabha Session** at Poona, where a new party was formed styled as the Sarvadeshik Hindu Sabha to work purely on nationalistic lines and to co-operate with all Indian political parties. The split had its origin in the anti-national and communal aspect of the Mahasabha which was obsessing a few of its adherents.

**Temple-Entry Satyagraha** :—Mass Satyagraha for temple-entry by Depressed Classes was apprehended in several cities in the United Provinces. Two of the Depressed Classes leaders in Lucknow issued an appeal for recruiting 180 volunteers, who would be sent out in batches to offer Satyagraha at the various Hindu temples in the province, where members of their community were refused admission. This decision was arrived at following a meeting of several panchayats of Balmiki sweepers, Bhagat "Raiedas" and Chamars, three different sections of the Depressed Classes. An appeal for volunteers was issued on behalf of those sections. It was pointed out in the manifesto that though the Hindu Mahasabha had recognised the right of temple-entry by Depressed Classes, the right had not been conceded by the custodians of the great Hindu temples.

**2nd. Bengal Congress Tangle settled** :—The Congress Working Committee in Bombay authorised the Congress President to nominate, after consulting Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, a provisional Bengal Provincial Congress Committee in order to carry out the work of the Congress in Bengal until a proper Congress Committee was duly elected. This had the effect of satisfying both the rival Congress groups in Bengal.

**Baroda Ruler's Diamond Jubilee** :—Gorgeous scenes marked the celebration of Diamond Jubilee of His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar, the most important part of the crowded programme, the Durbar for receiving the address of the people by the Maharaja. After the presentation of the address, the Maharaja in his message to his people, announced that in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee he had decided to set apart a fund of one crore of rupees, the income from which would be devoted to improving the conditions of life of the rural population, especially those of the poor and depressed classes. A science and technological institute was opened at Baroda on the occasion by H. E. the Viceroy.

**Indian Science Congress** :—His Highness the Maharaja Holkar of Indore inaugurated the 23rd session of the Indian Science Congress in Indore before a gathering of scientists from all over the country and visitors, including Sir S. M. Bapna, the Prime Minister, other ministers, high officers and prominent citizens of Indore State. Dr. P. Basu, Vice-Chancellor of the Agra University, welcoming the delegates, surveyed the great scientific discoveries in various fields in recent years and their effect on practical life. After the address of the president Sir U. N. Brahmachari, sectional meetings were held.

**Indian Economic Conference** :—Khan Bahadur M. Azizul Haque, Minister of Education, Bengal, opened the nineteenth session of the Indian Economic Conference at Dacca. India's fiscal position under the new Constitution was discussed at the Conference.

**3rd. A hint to police officers not to ask for increased salaries in view of the great poverty of the ryot was made in the presidential address at the conference of the Assam Police Association.**

Pandit Malaviya paid a fine tribute to H. H. the Gaekwar of Baroda in a speech at a special darbar held in connexion with the ruler's diamond jubilee celebrations.

- 7th. *Calcutta Khilafat Conference* :—The political ideal of the Moslems was described as equal status with other communities in a self-governing India, by the Nawab of Dacca in his presidential address at the Khilafat Conference in Calcutta.
- 8th. At a conference of landholders held in Calcutta, resolutions were passed demanding seats on the proposed Debt Conciliation Boards and requesting the authorities not to countenance agitation which would have the effect of interfering with the Permanent Settlement.  
A striking tribute to the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda was paid by His Excellency the Viceroy on the occasion of a State banquet.
- 9th. "The Congress during the next ten years" was the subject of an address delivered by Dr. Kitchlew to the students of a Lahore college.
- 10th. *House-Searches in Bombay* :—The Bombay Police carried out simultaneous house searches and raids and arrested 4 persons with the assistance of the Lahore Police. It was stated that the raids and arrests were prompted by the suspicion that the arrested persons were carrying on Communist activities in the city and distributing Communist literature. The Police seized large quantities of Communist literature, hundreds of copies of "The Communist", cyclostyle machines and other paraphernalia used for multigraphing copies. The arrested persons hailed from Northern India.
- 11th. The Congress attitude on the acceptance of Office was in itself the best proof that India had accepted the reforms, said Sir Mohammad Yakub in a speech at Bombay.
- 12th. *U. P. Unemployment Committee Report* :—The Report of the U. P. Unemployment Committee, appointed by the Government in October 1934, with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as Chairman, was released for publication. The Committee held 18 public sittings in various educational centres of the Province and examined 127 witnesses, including 30 officials, besides a number of memoranda submitted to it. The report laid great emphasis on the reorganisation of all stages of education, primary, secondary and higher, and said that the remedy for the evil of unemployment did not lie merely in stiffening the University standard so as to restrict the number of entrants. Apart from educational reform, the report advocated the development of vocational education on modern lines. There could not be one single remedy which could solve the question of unemployment, added the report, nor could the problem of unemployment be solved immediately, but if it was attacked systematically, on a well-conceived plan, with the resources available to the Government, great relief could be given to the unemployed among educated men.  
Sir Otto Niemeyer arrived in India to conduct his inquiry into the finances of the coming Federation.
- 13th. Dr. Subbaroyan of Madras revealed that India lost the chance of better Constitution at the second Round Table Conference in London owing to Mr. Gandhi's motives being misunderstood by Indian politicians.
- 14th. The service facilities offered to the minority communities and the measures undertaken to fight road competition were described in the annual administration report of Indian Railways for 1934-35.
- 15th. The Congress Socialists, it was understood, proposed to remain in the Congress in order to be in a position to fight the Reforms.  
A trenchant attack on the Hindu majority in the Calcutta Corporation and praise for the resignation of Moslem Councillors were made at a Moslem meeting in Calcutta.
- 16th. The Calcutta Corporation passed a resolution reiterating its policy of recognising the claims of qualified Moslems to a fair share in the Corporation services.

The Socialist Conference of Meerut concluded after passing several resolutions, including one indicating the line of action Congressmen should take in the Legislature on behalf of the masses.

**Death of King George the V:**—The death of His Majesty King George V at Sandringham at 11-55 p.m. (G. M. T.) in the presence of the Royal Household. The King suffered no pain. Wonderful world-wide tributes were paid by all shades of opinion throughout the world to the late King.

**22nd. Andhra Youth Conference:**—Resolutions demanding the release of all political prisoners, condemning the attitude of the Congress towards the Native States and opposing acceptance of offices under the new Constitution were passed by the Andhra Provincial Youth Conference, held at Cocanada under the presidency of Mr. J. Ramalingiah. Most of the resolutions evoked heated discussion.

The late King's deep concern for the welfare of his millions of subjects in India was referred to by His Excellency the Viceroy in an All-India broadcast message.

One hundred and thirty Sikhs were arrested in Lahore for defying the *tripsa-ban*.

**23rd. Harijans and Sanatan Dharma:**—The All-India Sanatan Dharma Conference, held at the Kumbha Mela, Allahabad, arrived at an unanimous decision that Harijans being the followers of Sanathan Dharma, it should be the duty of all Sanatanists to assist them in the enjoyment of privileges which the followers of Sanathan Dharma were entitled to. The Conference recorded resolutions to allow Harijans "Devadharshan" wherever they were disallowed till now, as also the use of wells and tanks, gardens, schools etc., without any interference or hindrance. The Conference enjoined its Committee to arrange for Brahmins to give the "Shiva Mantra" of five syllables on the occasion of the coming Shivaratri to the so-called untouchables also as was done to the Sanatanists.

A section of Lahore Moslems launched a "civil disobedience movement" in connection with the Shahidgunj mosque dispute.

**25th. Tamil Nad Provincial Conference:**—"Now that the Congress has been successful in getting the majority in all the newly elected District Boards and Municipalities and has also succeeded in getting its own men elected as Presidents and Chairmen respectively, it must be our endeavour to see that the good name of the Congress is maintained at any cost and that we do not fall victims to those very mistakes for which the party in power to-day is being condemned. Let these local bodies serve as a means to further local welfare as well as national interest", observed Mrs. Rukmani Lakshminipathi, in the course of her address in presiding over the thirty-seventh session of the Tamil Nad Provincial Conference held at Karaikudi.

The name of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru was recommended for the presidency of the Lucknow session of the Congress by a large number of provincial Congress Committees.

The C. P. Tobacco Taxation Bill was thrown out by a two to one majority in the C. P. Council.

One of the most important measures adopted in the Midnapore district to fight terrorism was the formation of anti-terrorist leagues with watch and ward committees.

**26th. Sikh Muslim Clash:**—Report of a serious clash between the Sikhs and Moslems was received from the village of Dhutial in Jhelum District, about 50 miles from Rawalpindi. It appears the trouble arose recently over the attempt to construct a shop facing the Gurdwara to which the Sikhs objected. The matter was reported to the Police, who intervened and arrested a dozen persons who were subsequently bound down to keep the peace. But a large number of Moslems, it was stated, attempted to take possession of the site which was resisted by the Sikhs, leading to a serious encounter lasting for several hours, when axes, lathis and lethal weapons were alleged to have been freely used and which resulted in injuries to about 30 persons. Simultaneously, it was stated, another party of Moslems came into clash with Sikhs at the Gurdwara Gurnasingh Sabha, in which one man who died fell from the roof of the Gurdwara during the scuffle.



**Funeral of King George:**—The funeral of His late Majesty King George V took place at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. King Edward and his brothers walked behind the coffin through London to Paddington station. All were in uniform, as well as the foreign Kings and Princes attending. Churches of all denominations throughout Britain were thronged, it being estimated that at least 1,000,000 persons attended the services. More than five hundred thousand persons filed through Westminster Hall where King George's body was lying in State. Patient queues, sombrely clad, stretched for miles. Moving forward at a snail's pace, those at the rear took four hours to reach the entrance to the Hall.

**27th.** In a broadcast talk on "Some of the dying industries of Bengal," the Government's Industrial Surveyor gave an account of the endeavours of the Department of Industries to rehabilitate those small and cottage industries of the province.

**28th.** Scenes of unexampled solemnity were witnessed in Calcutta on the occasion of the funeral of His Majesty King George V in London. An impressive memorial service at the Church of the Redemption, New Delhi, was the Imperial Capital's last tribute to King George.

**30th.** The Joint conference of the International Council of Women and the National Council of Women in India began in Calcutta.

Several persons were killed in a colliery explosion at Loyahad (Bihar). It was officially stated that five Europeans and 32 Indians were killed.

**31st.** Presiding at the annual meeting of the Indian Jute Mills Association, Mr. H. H. Burn gave a warning that unless an agreement was arrived at regarding the restriction of jute output a trade war with disastrous consequences to the industry was inevitable.

## FEBRUARY 1936

**4th.** The Assembly voted for a Joint Standing Army Committee of members of both Houses to advise on India's defence policy.

**5th. Search for Proscribed Literature:**—The C. I. D. with the assistance of the Police carried out searches in Lucknow. The police were maintaining the strictest secrecy as to the cause of these searches, but it was believed that these were the continuation of those conducted on January 30 last when several hundred copies of proscribed literature, it was alleged, were seized. It was reported from Allahabad that a number of searches were conducted by the Police in connection with Communist literature. The persons involved, it was alleged, were mostly students. Some pamphlets and other printed matter were taken possession of by the police. The police also searched three houses and a shop in quest of alleged Communist literature and seized certain books and papers.

**6th.** The Opposition in the Assembly defeated a Government motion regarding the closure on Clause 2 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

It was stated in the Assembly that the Government of India were alive to the need of drastic action regarding the Jharia coalfields where 45 separate fires were said to be raging.

**7th.** The opening of cottage industries as a cure for unemployment in Bengal was suggested by Mr. D. P. Khaitan in a speech in Calcutta.

**8th.** The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, urged the Government of India to terminate the Ottawa Trade Agreement without delay.

**9th. Andhra Provincial Conference:**—The fifteenth Conference was held at Cocanada under the presidency of Mr. C. Ramalinga Reddy. A large number of delegates from all over the province, including ladies, attended. Dr. Subrahmanyam, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the President and delegates,

commended the triple programme of boycott of councils preparing the country for direct action and carrying on village reconstruction work. Mr. T. Prakasam, declaring the Conference open, advocated council-entry and acceptance of office, as there was no suitable atmosphere in the country for direct action. While rejecting the new Constitution, the Lucknow Congress should lift the ban on acceptance of office, was the opinion expressed by the Conference, by a majority of 93 votes to 35. Mr. T. Prakasam was the principal supporter of the resolution, while Dr. Pattabhi Sethuramayya opposed it vigorously.

Calcutta Moslems held a demonstration and asked Moslems to boycott the municipal elections until the community's grievances in the Corporation were redressed.

- 11th. The assembly passed without a division Mr. Azhar Ali's resolution urging the Government to take over control of the B. and N. W. and M. and S. M. Railways.

Sir Henry Craik stated in the Assembly that the detention of the present number of State prisoners was necessary in the public interest.

- 12th. *Death of Mr. Bardoloi* :—Death occurred of Mr. Nabin Chandra Bardoloi, member of the Legislative Assembly and a devoted Congress workers and patriot of Assam.

- 13th. The Assembly rejected Mr. B. Das's Bill to amend the Criminal Law Amendment Act by 67 votes to 66.

A proposal for fixing minimum prices for agricultural produce was rejected in the Bengal Council.

The measures contemplated by the Madras Government to help handloom weavers in the province was explained by Sir Zafrullah Khan in the Assembly.

- 14th. Lieut. Mirri Chand, one of the competitors of the Viceroy's Trophy Air Race, was the first to arrive in Bombay. Lieut. Chand won the Viceroy's Cup Air Race at New Delhi.

*Whipping for offences against women* :—The Bengal Council passed without division the Whipping Bill providing whipping as punishment for some offences against women. Mr. Suhrawardy's motion for circulation of bill was defeated.

- 15th. *All India Moslem Conference* :—The political development and aspirations of the Moslem community in India were outlined by the Aga Khan when he addressed a meeting of the All-India Moslem Conference.

- 17th. The Railway Budget was presented in both Houses of the Central Legislature in New Delhi.

The Burma Council by 44 votes to 33 rejected the Criminal Law Amendment Act Bill sponsored by the Government.

- 18th. *Death of Sir D. Wacha* :—Sir Dinshaw Wacha, the oldest Congress President, died at his residence in Bombay. Sir Dinshaw was 91 years old and was keeping indifferent health for some months past. Mr. Gandhi issued the following statement regarding him :—"In the death of Sir Dinshaw Wacha, the country has lost a great patriot. The very first Congress, I had the privilege of attending, was presided over by him at Calcutta. I have vivid recollection of his great industries and unfailing courtesy to all. I remember well how much his fearless criticism of Government measures and his grasp of financial questions were admired by all Congressmen."

The Assembly accepted a non-official resolution recommending the extension of reforms to the backward tracts.

- 20th. His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, speaking at the dinner of the Calcutta Trades Association, declared that members of the Association should play a bigger role in public affairs.

The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research constituted two standing committees on rice and wheat which would consider the marketing facilities and general improvement of the two crops.

- 21st. In opening the ryots' conference in Serajganj, Nawab Sir Mohiuddin Faruqi made suggestions for increasing the income of agriculturists.

The scheme of relief outlined in the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Bill was explained by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy at a conference of agriculturists at Serajganj.

A striking tribute to the services rendered by the Aga Khan was paid by the Nawab of Rampur at the All-India Moslem Educational Conference at Rampur.

- 22nd. *Hitler's insult to India* :—At an urgent meeting of the Bombay Medical Union, the following resolution was unanimously passed by members of the Union against Herr Hitler's recent speech to the Nazi University students, Munich :—"This urgent meeting of the Bombay Medical Union resents the insult gratuitously hurled by Herr Hitler on the people of India in a recent speech, and unanimously resolves to recommend to the members of the Union and the medical profession in India to boycott German goods generally and all medical and surgical requisites particularly, wherever (and whenever possible, until an 'amende honourable' is made." It was further hoped that various Associations, medical as well as others in the country, would take up this question of national self-respect and pass similar resolutions and act upon them.

The Burma Council, for the second time, rejected the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

- 24th. The Congress Party's token out on the Railway Budget Estimates was carried in the Assembly by 62 votes to 45.

- 26th. Sir M. Zafrulla Khan, in the Assembly, denied that the claims of Bengali candidates for cadetships in the Officerin were superseded by those of Anglo-Indians.

Exclusion of other provincials from the motor driving trade in Bengal was proposed in the Bengal Council.

- 27th. *Ferozabad Riots sequel* :—Thirty-three Muslims were sentenced to transportation for life by the Sessions Judge of Agra on charges of rioting and committing arson and murders in Ferozabad in May last in a communal frenzy. Nineteen other accused were acquitted. It may be recalled that communal rioting occurred at Ferozabad, when Muslims set fire to several Hindu houses, particularly the house of Dr. Jivraj Mehta, who perished with his three children in the blaze. Eight other Hindus were also burnt to death.

The Assembly passed all the railway demands for grants.

Terrorist activities had not been absent from Bengal for a considerable time, said Sir Robert Reid in the Bengal Council.

- 28th. *Hunger-strike of a political prisoner* :—The condition of Jogesh Chatterjee, the Kakori Conspiracy Case prisoner, who was on hunger-strike in the Lucknow Central Jail, for more than 3 months, was reported to have taken a bad turn. His voice was reported to have become almost inaudible. "Hunger-strike or no hunger-strike, the question is whether his demands are reasonable, and we find they are so," said Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee presiding over a largely attended public meeting at Albert Hall, Calcutta, to consider Mr. Jogesh Chatterjee's fast. A resolution was passed supporting the demands of Mr. Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee regarding the political prisoners and urging on the Government the imperative need of conceding Mr. Chatterjee's demands, so as to prevent the threatened act of self-immolation, and further urging on Mr. Chatterjee to abandon the fast, as he had succeeded in enlisting public sympathy with the cause of political prisoners.

Sir James's Grigg's Budget for 1936-37, presented to the Assembly showed a surplus of over Rs. 2 crores.

A survey of trade conditions in Bengal was made by Mr. M. A. Isphani at the annual meeting of the Calcutta Muslim Chamber of Commerce.

The death took place at Geneva of Mrs. Kamala Nehru.

The Punjab Government granted an amnesty to "Shahidgunj prisoners" following an abandonment by Moslems of civil disobedience.

Sir G. Campbell, presiding over the meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, said that there was a feeling abroad that if the Agents of State Railways were allowed to manage their own lines, without control from the "unwieldy" Railway Board, the present deficits may be converted into surpluses.

## MARCH 1936

**1st. Lahore Peace Talks :**—Success crowned Mr. M. A. Jinnah's efforts to restore the peaceful atmosphere among Moslem ranks, as a preliminary to the restoration of communal harmony. While Muslims endorsed and accepted his advice for stopping civil disobedience and confining agitation to lawful means, Government, on their part, fully met Moslem demands as far as concern them, by declaring amnesty to Shahidgunj prisoners and restoring forfeited securities. Mr. Jinnah had before him the bigger problem of settlement with Sikhs. The Punjab Government decided to release all prisoners convicted of offences directly connected with the Shahidgunj agitation and not involving serious violence to person or property, or abetment of such violence. They also decided to withdraw the pending cases falling within the same category. They also revoked the action taken under the Indian Press Act, where this action was directly in connection with the Shahidgunj agitation.

**2nd. The report of the Hammond Delimitation Committee** was published.

The evil effects of the Montagu Award on the finances of Bengal and the need for the allocation to the province of the entire jute duty were stressed during Budget discussions in the Legislative Council.

**3rd. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry** urged retrenchment in railway expenditure with a view to augmenting the revenues.

**4th. The Aga Khan's Advice to Muslims :**—A warning against the formation of parties on a communal basis in the coming Reformed Councils and advice that forming political groups should only be on principles for raising the economic condition of the masses were given by H. H. the Aga Khan, speaking at the dinner party given in his honour by Sir Rafiuddin Ahmed, ex-Minister, Bombay Government. Putting forward a strong plea for the uplift of the depressed and backward classes, be they Muslims or Hindus, the Aga Khan said that he favoured the rich being taxed for the benefit of the poor.

**5th. Censure Motion Against Police :**—Without division, the C. P. Council carried Mr. K. P. Pandey's adjournment motion, in respect of "the assault with lathis and batons on and arrest of 43 persons by the Khandwa Police, including several respectable persons of high social status at Khandwa on February 27." The Home Member, Mr. Raghavendra Rao, said that though the case was technically sub-judice, it would become sub-judice any moment. He, therefore, asked the House to treat the matter as such. The evidence on record showed, he said, that when the Sub-Inspector and constables went to make investigations at the Ashram, where strange and suspicious characters were staying, and also asked the driver of Dhunivale Dadaji about the licence for driving the car, they were assaulted by the inmates and the Sub-Inspector confined to custody. When another police party went for their rescue, a mob of 300 attacked them with lathis. Rifles were tampered with and 15 policemen sustained injuries. As regards attack on women and other allegations regarding interviews with and legal assistance to prisoners, the matter was engaging the Government's attention and enquiries would be made.

7th. A committee of fifty leading Moslems of Calcutta was set up to conduct successfully the boycott of the Corporation elections.

A survey of the Punjab communal situation was made by the Governor in a speech at the European Association dinner.

8th. *Sadhus Sack a Village* :—An orgy of rioting, arson and looting was reported to have been committed by a gang of 400 Sadhus (mendicants) at Chandravali, a village in Sitapur District, U.P. It was dark, it was stated, when the gang of mendicants arrived at the village on their way to Musrikh, a place of pilgrimage. They decided to spend the night at the village and the villagers were approached for the free supply of at least four cart-loads of fuel for the Sadhus to warm themselves. The villagers did not comply with the request whereupon the gang surrounded the village to block any-body from escaping, and a party, armed with lathis and brickbats, forcibly broke open every house, dragged out the inmates and beat them mercilessly. Some houses were also set on fire, and cattle let loose and chased out. This rioting was reported to have lasted for several hours, in the course of which even standing crops on the outskirts of the village were destroyed.

No agreement was reached regarding the Shahidganj dispute, and Mr. Jinnah's retirement was considered a "strategic retreat."

10th. *Government defeats in the Assembly* :—The Congress party's out motion in the Assembly, moved by Mr. Asaf Ali, relating to the foreign and Political Department grant, to discuss the Frontier policy of the Government of India, was carried by 72 votes against 47. Another out motion moved by Mr. S. Satyamurthi, reducing demand for the Executive Council to one rupee, which was meant as a refusal of supplies with a view to showing that the House had no confidence in the Government, was carried by 68 votes against 62. The Opposition scored another victory, when the Independent Party's out motion refusing grant to the Defence Department, moved by Mr. K. L. Gauba, was carried by 79 votes to 46.

Review of commercial and political problems affecting Europeans in India was made at the annual meeting of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce.

11th. Assam's administrative problems were reviewed by the Governor in a striking address to the Legislative Council.

The Budget estimates for Assam, presented in the Council revealed that expenditure next year would be Rs 57,12,000 above the receipts.

The Council of State rejected a resolution demanding the formation of a non-official committee to advise on Defence affairs.

12th. *Mr. Jawaharlal Returns to India* :—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru returned to India by air. He was accorded a warm reception at Karachi and at Allahabad. He also brought with him the ashes of Mrs. Kamala Nehru which were immersed in the Ganges with due ceremony. A spontaneous hartal was observed in Allahabad in memory of Mrs. Nehru.

Assam Land Revenue Re-assessment Bill was accepted in the Legislative Council.

The Assembly passed Mr. M. S. Aney's motion censuring the Government's "policy of repression" and rejected Sir L. Hudson's motion demanding the abolition of the surcharge on incomes.

The smaller States of Gujarat and Kathiawar were in favour of a confederation of their own instead of their amalgamation with larger Indian States.

13th. The abolition of the Permanent Settlement in Bengal was demanded by the Bengal Council during the debate on a cut motion on budget grants under the head "Land Revenue."

The Council of State recommended that women be admitted to its membership.

**14th. West Kistna Political Conference :—**That this country should not be stampeded into accepting a Socialist State, but should be permitted to consider calmly whether such a state would accord with the genius of the country, was the plea made by Dr. D. S. Ramachandra Rao, in his address welcoming the delegates to the West Kistna Political Conference, held at Barwada. Srimathi Rukmani Lakshmi pati, presided. Delegates from all over the district were present in large numbers. The conference passed a number of important resolutions among which one recommended drastic changes in the constitution of the Congress and another reiterated the goal of the Congress as Purna Swaraj, which could be achieved only by Civil Disobedience.

Pandit Malaviya advised Harijans not to break away from Hinduism and stated that no other religion had claims on the community as it was a domestic quarrel among Hindus.

**15th. Pandit Malaviya in Nasik :—**A rousing reception was accorded to Pandit Malaviya when he arrived at Nasik in connection with Harijan propaganda. Led by bedecked horses and Hindu scouts, with bands playing the Pandit was taken in procession through the gaily festooned streets of the city to the bungalow on the river-bank. Huge crowds greeted the Pandit when he entered the city from the railway station, where he and party were welcomed by the Reception Committee members. Three hundred associations representing all communities garlanded him. Later, addresses on behalf of the Hindu Sabha and citizens were presented at a mammoth meeting near Holy Ramkund. The addresses stressed Pandit Malaviya's services to the country in educational, social, religious and political spheres.

**Pt. Jawaharlal's exhortation :—**"Discipline should be our sheet anchor," said Pt. Nehru addressing the Volunteer Corps at Motinagar, Allahabad, when he opened the second battalion of the Congress Volunteer Corps. He asked them not to be disheartened by the lull in political atmosphere but be ready to respond to the country's call whenever it came. He deprecated the idea of people thinking of Mr. Gandhi as an Avatar and that Swaraj would fall from Heaven and apply to everyone, irrespective of caste, or creed or sex, to think independently, weigh every proposals before them, appreciate such proposals in the true perspective and arrive at independent judgment, prior to giving assent to every call for sacrifice made on them.

**16th. The Commander-in-Chief made an important statement in regard to the Indian Military Academy in the Council of State**

The Government of Bengal's irrigation policy was explained in the Legislative Council during the debate on the demand for a grant of Rs. 34,29,000 under this head.

**17th. Agricultural Training for Detenus :—**"Experiments in connection with the scheme of industrial and agricultural training for detenus are distinctly hopeful," said the Home Member of the Bengal Government, moving a demand of Rs. 1,10,51,000 under General Administration, in the Bengal Council. The centres were run virtually on boarding house lines with minimum restrictions, he added. Fifteen detenus were receiving instructions in each of the four camps and 23 were working in the Agricultural Centre. Arrangements had been made to open six more industrial centres, giving 90 men instructions and another Agricultural Centre would be opened to provide instruction for 45 men.

A strong plea for the industrialization of India was made by Sir H. Mody speaking on the Finance Bill in the Assembly.

A suggestion for centralizing under one committee the phases of the health welfare activities was made by Sir John Anderson at a meeting of the Bengal and Calcutta Health Welfare Week Committees in Calcutta.

**18th. Military Route Marches in Bengal :—**In order to discuss the military route marches in various districts of Bengal a motion was made in the Bengal Council, to reduce the demand for Rs. 12,000 under the head Executive Council by Rs. 100. The mover, Mr. P. Bannerjee, alleged that the marches were arranged in those villages which were either politically advanced or where Congress workers lived.

Mr. N. K. Dasu urged that the allegations of Mr. Bannerjee called for swift and immediate enquiry. The Home Member, replying, said that none of the representatives of Midnapore District in the Council came forward to represent the grievances. He had absolute faith in the man on the spot. Since 1932, there had been very few extraordinary cases of indiscipline among troops in Bengal. As regards saluting the Union Jack Government did not force anybody to salute it against his wishes. It was a travesty of truth that troops were terrorising the countryside. The motion was lost.

The suggestion of the Fiji Government that the method of selecting Indian representatives in the Fiji Council should be by nomination and not election was opposed in the Council of State.

The administration of the Calcutta Corporation was criticized by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy in the Bengal Council.

**19th. Anti-Constitution Conference :—**An Anti-Constitution Conference of Congressmen held at Bombay passed resolution on the question of office acceptance under the new constitution and declared that the Conference was emphatically of opinion that acceptance of offices under the constitution was direct contravention of the goal of the National Independence and declared policy of rejecting the Reforms. Acceptance of offices, for whatever purposes, amounted to working the reforms and co-operation with the Government in carrying on the administration which had exploited and would continue to exploit the country. It was the considered opinion of the Conference that Congressmen should under no circumstances accept offices and should resolve to carry on an intensive struggle against the policy of office acceptance. The resolution also called on the Bombay delegates to the Lucknow session of the Congress to vote against any proposal which might lead directly or indirectly to a policy of accepting offices.

**20th. The Finance Bill rejected in Assembly :—**Pandit Nilkantha Das moved in the Assembly that to Clause 2 of the Finance Bill relating to salt duty the following be added : "And the said provisions shall, in so far as they enable the Governor-General-in-Council to remit any duty so imposed, be construed as if with effect from April 1, 1936, they remitted duty to the extent of the said one rupee and four annas and such remission shall be deemed to have been made out of the leviable duty by Rule made under that section." Dr. Bhagwan Das supported the amendment, saying that for people whose daily income was calculated by the Central Banking Enquiry Committee as seven pice daily, the salt tax was cruel. Sir James Grigg, the Finance Member, opposed the amendment on the ground that it would involve loss of revenue to the extent of eight crores. The amendment was carried by 52 votes to 41, members of the Independent Party remaining neutral. The Assembly passed the amendment of Dr. Banerji to the Finance Bill, reducing the price of a post card to half anna, by 83 votes to 44. Mr. Pallavi moved that the quarter anna postage should carry registered newspapers weighing up to 10 tolas instead of 8 as now. Mr. G. V. Bhowar, opposing the motion, said that the change would cost the Government Rs. 74,000. The rate was already the smallest compared with the rates in other countries and had not been increased since 1808. The motion was passed by 64 votes to 41. The Finance Bill was recommended by His Excellency the Viceroy in its original form, excepting the amendment with regard to the postal rate for newspapers. The Assembly rejected the recommended Bill by 68 votes to 51.

**Sind Hindus Conference :—**The fears of the Hindu minority under separated Sind were voiced at the All-Sind Hindu Conference held at Karachi. The Conference urged on the Government the necessity of introducing into the new Constitution proper safeguards and system of Joint Electorates, with reservation of seats with sufficient weightage and equitable adjustment of franchise in the local Assembly. The Conference, disagreeing with the neutral attitude of the Congress on the Communal Award, opined that the Award was a negation of the elementary principle of democratic Government. The Conference further developed the reported attitude of the Bahawalpur State authorities to the Hindus and sympathised with their brethren and appealed to the Government of India to intervene and bring about reconciliation.

**22nd. Boycott of Calcutta Municipal Elections :—**A largely attended meeting of Calcutta Moslems was held in the Calcutta Maidan, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca presiding, to ventilate Moslem grievances in connection with the City Corporation affairs. Small processions of Moslems carrying posters shouting, "Boycott Corporation elections," were taken out from different parts of the City, terminating at the meeting place. The meeting condemned the conduct of Moslems, since declared elected to the Corporation who "deliberately flouted the will of the entire community" by not resigning their seats and resented the attitude of indifference on the part of the Moslem members of the Bengal Legislature in this connection and demanded of them that the interest of Moslems should be properly safeguarded and also reiterated the decision to boycott the ensuing Corporation election and not to accept Government nomination or appointment or seek election to Corporation as Alderman until Moslem grievances were redressed.

**Anti-ministry day :—**A public meeting held at Khalikdina Hall, Karachi, in connection with the Anti-Ministry Day resolved that in view of the fact that the Government of India Act is a denial of India's inalienable right of self-determination and is reactionary and retrograde, the Lucknow Congress should decide to make a warning that the Constitution is impossible of being worked. It further opined that acceptance of Ministerial office by Congressmen is undesirable and would prove disastrous to Congress and for freedom. The Anti-Ministry Day was observed in Benares also.

**23rd. Censure motion Re : Ban on Mr. Bose :—**In the Assembly, Mr. Nilkantha Das moved an adjournment motion to censure the Government for the decision conveyed to Mr. Subash Chandra Bose that if he returned to India he could not be expected to remain at liberty. The motion was carried by the House by 65 votes to 56. Some Independents including Mr. Jinnah remained neutral.

**Company Law Amendment :—**Sir N. N. Sircar, Law member, introduced in the Assembly the Bill amending the Company Law, which had been hammered into final shape, as the result of discussions with commercial leaders. Opinions received disclosed the demand for deal with mush-room and fraudulent companies, for changes in the provisions relating to issue and contents of prospectuses, for increased disclosure to shareholders of the financial position of companies and for increased right to shareholders in connection with management of companies for modification of the present law applicable to Managing Agents, for changes in provisions applicable to winding up, for special provisions to govern banking companies and for numerous other improvements. The Bill retains the existing form of the Indian Act. The English Law had been followed where possible.

**Compulsory Primary Education for girls :—**The Government of the United Provinces sanctioned the introduction, with effect from April 29, 1936, of compulsory primary education of girls whose ages were not less than six and not more than eleven years (in the case of Muslim girls not less than five and not more than nine years) in the Itaunja and Kakori village areas of the Lucknow district. This was the second district board whose scheme had been sanctioned by the Government under Section 3 (2) of the United Province District Board Primary Education Act. 1926.

**24th. University for the Frontier Provinces :—**The Frontier Council carried a non-official resolution, recommending the establishment of a Unitary University at Peshawar. Dr. Gill, Director of Education, said that the Local Government submitted a strong case for a grant to the Government of India, hoping it would include it in the subvention. Sir Abdul Quaiyum, Minister, said that the new University would cater to the needs of the tribal area forming half the Province. It was not their intention to transmit to the tribal areas ideas imported by mistake from South India.

**25th. The U. P. Unemployment Committee's report** was discussed in the Council of State.

The Finance Bill, as recommended by the Governor-General, was rejected by the Legislative Assembly.

**26th. Import duty on Wheat :—**The Punjab Council unanimously passed a non-official resolution, recommending to the Government to convey to the Government of India



that in view of the prevailing low prices, the import duty on wheat should be raised to Rs. 2 per hundred-weight. Nawab Musaffar Khan, Revenue Member, supporting the resolution said that the Punjab had already strongly represented the matter to the Government of India and promised to further convey the wish of the House to them.

- 28th. Uplift of Muslims :—**The All-India Moslem Conference, held at New Delhi, under the presidency of Haji Abdullah Haroon, among other things, discussed the question of the uplift of the masses, especially the Muslims. The Conference was of opinion that it was imperative to adopt a programme for their moral, intellectual, social and economic betterment. The Conference authorised the Working Committee to execute and popularise the programme and frame definite lines of action at the earliest possible moment and devise effective measures most likely to reform and ameliorate the condition of the poor and unemployed cultivators and starving masses of India.

The Madras Government passed orders on the report of the special officer appointed to inquire into agricultural indebtedness in the province.

In criticizing India's protection policy Sir H. P. Mody made a plea for the setting up of a new fiscal commission.

The Maharaja of Darbhanga gave one lakh of rupees to the Bihar Memorial to His late Majesty King George V.

The creation of local self-government institutes was advocated at the first All-India Local Self-Government Conference at Delhi.

The Legislative Assembly adopted the report of its Committee on the findings of the Indian Delimitation Committee.

- 29th. The All-India Moslem Conference at Delhi** passed a resolution condemning the renewed attacks on the Communal Award.

An agreement was reported to have been reached on the Nizam's claim for a symbolic expression of his sovereignty over Berar.

Addressing Bombay journalists, Sir Stanley Reed said that to be a successful journalist, one must first become a reporter.

There had been a fall in the number of industrial strikes in Bombay in 1934-35 as a result of the Government's efforts for conciliation.

- 30th. Assembly's Verdict on Ottawa Pact :—**The Assembly accepted by 70 to 65 votes Mr. Jinnah's amendment urging immediate termination of the Ottawa Pact and recommending to the Government to examine the trend of trade for entering into bilateral treaties with foreign countries, including the United Kingdom. Sir Cowasji Jehangir and Sir H. P. Mody voted for the Government. The nominated members Mr. D'Souza and Mr. N. M. Joshi voted in favour of Mr. Jinnah's motion. The two Burman members voted for the amendment in spite of Sir Mahomed Zafrulla's appeal that the rejection of the Ottawa Pact would have repercussions on the Indo-Burma Agreement.

**Punjab Debtors' Protection Bill :—**The Punjab Debtors' Protection Bill which was passed by the Council last session was sent back to the Council for re-consideration. It would be recalled that certain vital Government amendments proposed to the Bill during the last session were not accepted by the House. The Bill in the form recommended by the Governor, sought to make exemption of ancestral property from attachment conditional, among other things, on the determination of the liability of such land by the court as if this section had not been expressly charged by way of mortgage on the ancestral individual property by the predecessor in interest, whereas the Bill as passed, made the exemption unconditional.

A municipality's responsibilities in regard to the education of its citizens was the subject of an address at the Local Self-Government Conference at Delhi.

An appeal to the Government to revise their railway coal purchase policy was made at the annual meeting of the Indian Mining Federation.

A Bill proposing abolition of local boards was introduced in the Bengal Council.

The Assembly accepted Mr. M. A. Jinnah's amendment demanding the termination of the Ottawa Agreement.

The Council of State passed the Finance Bill as certified by the Governor-General by 32 votes to 10.

**31st. Gandhiji on Temple-entry Campaign :—**In a communication to the "Harijan" on temple-entry, Gandhiji wrote : "Local Sanghs should make a sustained effort to have the existing temples thrown open, and even to build new ones, not for Harijans only, but for all. Care must be taken that where temples are opened to Harijans, no discrimination is made against them: They must be opened on precisely the same terms as they are opened to other Hindus. It is hardly necessary to state that in different localities different methods may be adopted for securing the desired end. Perfect non-violence must, of course, be maintained in all cases. An All-India, simultaneous movement of the same type, is not contemplated. It will vary in intensity and methods, according to the circumstances of each locality. Nowhere should temples be opened, where there is an active minority opposed to the opening. Practical unanimity should be secured before a temple is opened. Thus what is required is sustained effort to convert local public opinion in favour of temple-entry."

## APRIL 1936

- 1st. Sind a New Province :—**The inauguration of the new province of Sind took place. Sir Lancelot Graham, the Governor, entered upon his duties on 1st April. The Mayor of Karachi, Kazi Khuda Bux, presented His Excellency with an address of welcome to which His Excellency replied suitably. The message of H. E. the Viceroy, conveying His Majesty the King-Emperor's message, was read by His Excellency.
- 2nd. Mr. Rajendra Prasad, Congress President, appealed to different political parties in India to adopt a tolerant attitude to one another.**
- 4th. A resolution supporting the Assembly vote regarding the Ottawa Agreement was passed at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce.**
- 6th. Inauguration of Orissa Province :—**His Excellency Sir John Hubback was installed as the first Governor of the newly constituted Province when at the Durbar Hall of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, Mr. P. T. Mansfield, Chief Secretary-designate of Orissa read the warrant of appointment and Sir Courtney Terrel, Chief Justice of Patna High Court, administered oaths of allegiance and office to His Excellency. Immediately following his installation, His Excellency was the recipient of a joint address from deputations representing Oriya Peoples' Association, Orissa Landholders' Association, Orissa Chamber of Commerce, Orissa Mahomedan Association and All-Orissa Domiciled Bengalees' Association. Replying to the address, His Excellency, in the course of his speech, read a special message from his Majesty the King-Emperor, which he had sent through the Viceroy together with Viceroy's own message.  
His Excellency Sir John Anderson invested the Maharaja of Cooh Behar with rulling powers at a durbar held at Cooh Behar.
- 7th. The Legislative Assembly rejected a resolution urging the release of detainees, the Congress Party declining to take part in the voting.**
- 8th. H. E. Lord Willingdon's Address :—**His Excellency the Viceroy addressed both Houses of the Central Legislature. He surveyed at length the political and economic situation in the country and the position of Indians overseas, appealing to other parts of the Empire to realise India's status in the British Commonwealth of Nations. He concluded his address by drawing a vivid picture of the future of the country under the new Constitution and wished all good wishes to the new Viceroy.

Mr. S. C. Bose was arrested on landing at Bombay.

The Government Bill to amend the Indian Mines Act so as to provide against the danger of fires in collieries was referred by the Assembly to a Select Committee.

Several changes, including the abolition of the manual labour clause and the method of election of delegates and President of the Congress, were adopted by the Congress Working Committee.

9th. *The Lucknow Congress* :—Mr. Satyamurthi was the only speaker in the Assembly on his Bill to repeal or amend repressive Laws. He spoke for 3 hours and his speech was unfinished.

Socialists suffered a defeat in the Subjects Committee meeting of the Congress over proposed changes in the constitution.

12th. Criticism of the new Reforms in India was made by Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, presiding at the U. P. Liberal Conference at Fyzabad.

The need for public help in effecting educational reforms in India was emphasized at the College and University Teachers' Conference.

The goal of the All-India Muslim League was responsible self-government for India, declared the President.

The Subjects Committee of the Congress accepted the Working Committee's resolution, condemning the India Act and postponing office issue.

12th. The new Constitution was condemned by Mr. M. A. Jinnah in a resolution which was accepted by the Muslim League at Bombay.

The United Provinces Liberal Party continued their conference at Fyzabad.

Government measures for the relief of unemployment were discussed by the Hon. Nawab Sir Mohiuddin Faroque, Bengal Minister.

The Congress session opened in Lucknow.

13th. *Guntur Andhra Conference* :—The Guntur District Andhra Mahasabha Conference was held at Tenali, with the Raja of Challepalle in the chair. Nearly a thousand persons, including delegates from Ganjam, attended the function. The Conference urged that a separate Andhra Province be formed with 12 Telugu districts of the Madras Presidency. Another resolution demanded that the Ceded Districts be included again in the jurisdiction of the Andhra University. The Mahasabha requested the Government to give representation to Andhras in the public services either on the basis of population or on the basis of revenue derived from the Andhra area. Another resolution called upon the electors of this district and of this province to give their votes only to those who supported the formation of a separate Andhra Province and who would agitate for the recovery of Andhra tracts now annexed to Grissa.

The Congress passed the official resolution, rejecting the new constitution and postponing the issue of acceptance of office by its members.

Women for the first time held a conference of their own in the Congress camp at Lucknow.

The scope for industrial expansion in the North and South Arcot districts and adjacent areas as a result of the Mettur Scheme, was outlined in a Note submitted to the Madras Government.

• The goodwill rather than political machinery built up the strength of the nation was the view expressed by Mr. Ranganadhan, presiding over a conference of South Indian Christians at Madras.

14th. The legislative Assembly passed two Bills prohibiting loans and credits to Italy and extending the additional import duty on Salt at a reduced rate.

The Congress session concluded at Lucknow after drafting an agrarian programme.

15th. Sir M. N. Srinivas moved in the Legislative Assembly for a select committee on his Bill to amend the Indian Companies Act.

A reference to the clash of ideas in the Congress was made by Pandit Nehru before the meeting of the All-India Committee at Lucknow.

**18th. Congress Nationalist Party:**—The failure of unity talks with Congress leaders and the decision of the Lucknow Congress to fight the next election on its own ticket made the Congress Nationalist Party organise themselves on a permanent basis and begin their campaign in right earnest and put up a strong fight against the Congress in the forthcoming elections to the Provincial Legislatures. This was the purpose of the Provincial Hindu Conference held at Poona under the presidency of Kumar Ganganand Sinha and another held at Agra under the presidency of Raja Sir Rampal Singh. The party, whatever its local name and origin will, under affiliation, be called the Nationalist Party for All-India purposes. Nationalists, at their meeting at Birla house on April 18, arrived at two main conclusions, the first regarding contesting the forthcoming elections and the second that they should for that purpose form a coalition with other parties such as Liberals, Landholders and others, who have been affected by the Communal Award or who feel its adverse effects on national life and outlook. This party believed that all avenues of honourable compromise having been closed by the Congress, they must form a party on a permanent basis.

**18th. Lord and Lady Willingdon left for England.**

The Marquess of Linlithgow was installed as Viceroy at New Delhi and made his first broadcast to the people of India.

Questions regarding the termination of the Ottawa Agreement were asked in the Legislative Assembly.

Problems relating to the tea industry were discussed by the chairman of the Indian Tea Planters' Association at its annual general meeting held at Jalpaiguri.

**19th. Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Marchioness of Linlithgow fed the poor of Delhi to commemorate their arrival and their silver wedding.**

**20th. Italy's "high-handedness" in Abyssinia was condemned in the Council of State when the House passed the Bill banning credit to Italy.**

The Legislative Assembly passed the Validating Bill removing certain doubts and establishing the validity of certain High Court proceedings.

**22nd. The preferential margin on United Kingdom imports of fents would be considerably reduced as a result of an amendment to the Tariff Bill accepted by the Assembly.**

**24th. Hindu-Muslim Riot in Poona:**—There was serious Hindu-Muslim rioting in front of the Maruthi temple, in Poona, necessitating British Military being called out. Three hundred police, under officers, rushed to the scene and restored order. One Inspector was injured. The authorities then called out the Military. Over 200 persons were injured. The Bombay Government issued a communique on the riots, in the course of which they said: The Sonya Maruthi Temple, which was formerly on the wall of a house in Raviwarpath, was reconstructed last year in a small area on the public road, because the house was pushed back owing to the broadening of the road. Prior to the change, Hanuman Jayanti used to be celebrated in the shrine with music. When reconstruction of the shrine on the public way was sanctioned by the District Magistrate, it was laid down that there should not be obstruction to the public and that the trustees should give a written undertaking that music would not be played before the shrine. This written undertaking, pointed out the communique, however was not received, and when the time for celebrating Hanuman Jayanti approached, the District Magistrate, on receipt of request for permission to play music from April 6 to 23 prohibited under Sub-Section 42, Bombay District Police Act, playing music at the shrine, or any public place within 30 yards. Later, the trustees of the shrine approached the District Magistrate for permission for worship with music, on the last day of the festival only, representing that the feelings of the Hindus had been seriously stirred by the prohibitory order. The District Magistrate

invited prominent Mahomedans and discussed the situation with them. They admitted that no objection was offered by their co-religionists in the past probably because the shrine had not been in such a prominent position. After further discussion and careful consideration, the District Magistrate issued an order on April 23, permitting worship with music on April 24 from the shrine with restriction as to the times of play and on condition that no obstruction was caused to traffic. At 9 p. m., on April 24, when Hindus commenced worship, Mahomedans collected near the shrine in increasing numbers, but were kept moving by the police. Later another crowd of Mahomedans came towards the shrine, shouting "Din, Din." On their being pushed back, other Mahomedans arrived and commenced flinging stones and bricks at the shrine. More Hindus came on the scene and retaliated by throwing stones. The rival crowds were separated and pushed back by the Police. Members of both parties had lathis, and several Police were injured. Eventually, the Hindus were prevailed upon to discontinue worship and the crowds to disperse. At noon the situation became more serious as Mahomedans began damaging the property of Hindus.

**28th.** Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah appealed to the Scheduled Castes to work the new Reforms, and to form election boards in each province to contest the coming elections.

**27th. More Communal Riots :—**One Hindu was killed and several were injured, including one Mahomedan, in a communal riot which occurred in front of a mosque at Jamalpur, Monghyr District, while a Hindu wedding procession was passing along the main road in Jamalpur. When a Marwari marriage procession was going past a mosque at Jalpaiguri, with music and band, Mahomedans, it was alleged, came out of the mosque and demanded immediate stoppage of music. The Police, in charge of the procession, had the music discontinued, but in the meantime, it was alleged, missiles were hurled at the processionists as the result of which one was injured. A report from Khanpur, Belgaum District, said that a Hindu-Moslem fracas occurred there last week. Three on each side were injured. It was alleged that a Mahomedan attacked members of a procession who were taking out the portrait of Bhashewar which led to the fracas.

**29th. Mr. Nehru's Appeal :—**Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Congress President, addressed a public meeting of over 10,000 people at Chitnavis Park, Nagpur. Mr. Nehru said : "I will not ask you to cast a single vote in favour of Congress if you do not wish to vote for independence."

**30th.** Sir Otto Niemeyer's report on the allocation of finances under the new Constitution was published.

## MAY 1936.

**2nd.** A claim for Government recognition of Ayurvedic system of medicine in Bengal was made at a conference held in Calcutta.

Lord Linkithgow visited two villages near Dehra Dun and had informal talks with the inhabitants.

To implement the recommendations of the Sapru Committee the Lucknow University proposed the starting of a school of dentistry and a veterinary science department.

**3rd.** Sir K. V. Reddi was appointed to act as Governor of Madras during the absence, on four months' leave, of Lord Erskine.

**7th.** The Marwari Association claimed that Bengal had been most ungenerously treated by the Niemeyer settlement.

Authoritative circles in the Panjab were disturbed by the "niggardly treatment" meted out to the Province in the Niemeyer Report.

The appointment of Sir Feroz Khan Noon as High Commissioner for India was officially announced.

9th. Resolutions expressing sympathy with Abyssinia and criticising the action of Italy were passed at meetings held in many places in India.

Efforts were being made for closer co-operation between the Congress and Trade Union movement.

10th. *Dr. Anasari's end*:—The death occurred of Dr. M. A. Anasari, ex-President of the Congress, in train, while he was travelling from Dehra Dun to Delhi.

That Congress unity in Madras would be replaced by warring factions, each greedy for power, if the ban on acceptance of Ministerial responsibility were raised, was the fear expressed by S. Subramanian at the Villupararam Pol. Conference.

The Calcutta Corporation adjourned as a protest against the arrest and detention of Mr. Subhas Bose.

12th. *Socialist Houses Raided*:—The C.I.D. Police raided the office of the Punjab Socialist Party at Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, in the early hours and searched the belongings of four workers. Searches were also carried out in the houses of President of the Press Workers' Union and of another student. Certain papers and books were seized. No arrests were made. Searches were carried out simultaneously in about a dozen places, including the houses of the General Secretary of the Punjab Socialist Party and other office-bearers and prominent members of the party. It was stated that the searches were a sequel to the alleged distribution at a meeting held in observance of the Subash Bose Day on May 10, of a proscribed leaflet relating to Communism. Reports from Amritsar showed that similar searches of houses of members of the Socialist Party were carried out there also.

The comments of the Provincial Governments together with the Government of India's views on the Niemeyer Report were published.

Four hundred and fifty agricultural farms were established in Bengal with the help of the rural development grant of the Government of India.

One of the biggest fires that ever occurred in Bombay, caused damage estimated at Rs. 25 lakhs.

14th. "Not a hell on earth but a prisoners' paradise" was how Sir Henry Craik described the Andar-un on his return from a visit of inspection.

15th. In a talk with Bombay journalists Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that while he remained convinced that socialism was the only political panacea for India's ills he would not seek to force this view on Congress.

The death occurred in Calcutta of Sir R. N. Mookerjee. Sir Rajendra was one of Calcutta's foremost commercial magnates. He was senior partner of Messrs. Martin & Co.

16th. India's formal notice to terminate her participation in the terms of the Ottawa Pact was acknowledged by the Board of Trade.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was trying to bring about unity in trade union ranks in Bombay.

Mr. E.aghavendra Rao took the Oath of Office as Acting Governor of the Central Provinces at Pachmarhi.

17th. *Trade Unions and Congress*:—The 15th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress opened at Bombay in the presence of a large gathering of workers and Trade Union leaders. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Congress President, together with other local Congressites and Socialists were present. Addressing the Congress, Mr. Jawaharlal appealed to the working classes and the Trade Union Congress to establish closer contact with the Congress. The Congress was the only organisation in the country, he said, which had attempted to bring about a revolution. "You claim to be revolutionaries and raise revolutionary slogans, but they will not bring freedom," he added. "Although there is fundamental difference in the ideology and methods of working of the Indian National Congress and the Trade Union Congress, I firmly believe these two bodies can still work in unison in regard to many matters." Therefore he emphasised the need for closer contact.

The death occurred at Bangalore of Sir M. Ramachandra Rao, a director of the Reserve Bank of India.

**18th. Business-men and Socialism :—**The apprehensions created in the minds of Indian businessmen by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's advocacy of a Socialistic form of Government for India found expression in the issue of a joint manifesto by 21 leading businessmen of Bombay. The signatories said: Pandit Jawaharlal, in his presidential speech at Lucknow Congress, said: "I see no way of ending the poverty, vast unemployment, degradation and subjection of the Indian people, except through Socialism. That involves vast revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, ending vested interests in the land and industry as well as the feudal, autocratic Indian States system. That means ending private property, except in a restricted sense and replacement of the present profit system by the higher ideal of co-operative service."

Moving tributes were paid at a meeting of the Calcutta Corporation to the qualities that made the late Sir R. N. Mookerjee's career unique in the annals of Indian National life.

Because of his uncompromising attack on the Hindu caste system, a Hindu mandal cancelled the annual session over which Dr. Ambedkar was to have presided.

Indian Labour's attitude towards the new Constitution was outlined in a resolution passed at the Trade Union Conference.

Five persons were killed and 20 injured in a clash between parties of Moslems, Christians and Ezhawas near Trivandrum.

Two Moslems were injured in a clash between Sikhs and Moslems at Lahore.

**20th.** Deploring the growth of socialism in India a leading Indian merchant suggested that economic regeneration was the best way to counter the "evil"; meanwhile Pandit Nehru told a Bombay audience that they despaired of bridging the gulf between "Big Business" and socialists.

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was brought to Kurseong under escort and was detained in his brother's home.

**21st.** Mr. S. Satyamurthi, at a meeting in Kumbakonam, was reported to have stated that if he became a Minister under the new Constitution he would provide the police with Khaddar uniforms.

Rapid progress was being made with the scheme for the industrial and agricultural training of Bengal detenus.

**22nd.** The younger section of Bombay merchants supported Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's Socialist programme.

**23rd.** That India had vast untapped resources which it would require the services of skilled engineers to place at the country's service was the subject of the Minister of Education's address to students of the Shipur Engineering College.

**24th.** The Minister for Education, Bengal, speaking at a Hoogly function, described the unemployment problem as "a national crisis."

**25th. All India Depressed Classes Conference :—**A resolution urging the members of the Depressed Classes not to embrace any other religion till the question was finally decided at the next All-India Conference was passed at the All-India Adi-Hindu Depressed Classes Conference held at Lucknow under the presidentship of Dr. Rasiklal Vyas of Calcutta. The Conference also passed a resolution expressing full confidence in Dr. Ambedkar and supporting the Yeola decision taken under his presidentship regarding change of religion.

The Shahidganj Civil dispute was dismissed. There was tense excitement in Lahore on the eve of the judgment.

The uneconomic competition between the road and railway services in India was condemned by the general secretary of the Transport Development Association.

**26th.** Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made another effort to induce Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to join his proposed Civil Liberties Union.

The Congress launched its foreign campaign for the overthrow of Imperialism. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry submitted their view on the Niemeyer report to the Government of India.

**27th.** A resolution for the constitution of a special committee to consider the question of appointment of Moslems was considered by the Calcutta Corporation.

**28th.** The Chairman of the Tata Iron and Steel Company announced that it was intended to explore the possibilities of developing the steel industry in this country.

**29th.** The need for a clearer perspective so that trifles do not present the appearance of insurmountable obstacles in India's progress was urged by Pandit Nehru in a speech at Lahore.

**30th.** Presiding at the Bombay Presidency Mahars Conference Mr. B. S. Venkata Rao discussed the question of Harijans' leaving Hinduism.

In an address to the Punjab Political Conference at Gujranwala, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru reiterated his faith in Socialism as the panacea for all India's ills.

The charge that the Congress President's faith was not in Socialism but in Communism was made by Sir Cowasji Jehangir of Bombay. Sir Cowasji accused Pandit Nehru of using Socialism as a smoke screen for Communist propaganda.

**31st.** At a meeting where Punjab peasants presented Pandit Nehru with a banner bearing the Communist emblems of the hammer and sickle, he made the significant remark that he did not wish them to copy everything in Russia.

Punjab merchants told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that his socialist views, including the cancellation of debts, were dangerous doctrines to preach to illiterate villagers.

## JUNE 1936.

**1st.** Mr. Satyamurti, in a speech at Madras, said that while there were valuable elements in Socialism, he was opposed to expropriation of property and private rights.

**3rd.** Lahore merchants expressed their apprehensions about Pandit Nehru's Socialist doctrines and vainly endeavoured to persuade him that his propaganda was inopportune.

A powerful plea for the constitution of an Indian Bar, so as to remove the present grade distinctions among lawyers, was made by the President of the Bengal and Assam Lawyers' Conference at Barisal.

The announcement of the decision of the British Medical Council to recognize Indian degrees was received with mixed feelings in Indian medical circles in Calcutta.

**6th.** Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's over-emphasis on Socialism had, it was reported, caused some dissatisfaction to his colleagues in the Congress.

Heavy rain in Assam continued to swell the Brahmaputra's waters, resulting in floods, while many towns in Bengal experienced severe storms.

**7th.** The Political Conference at Unao passed a resolution that, in the event of an Imperialist war, India should be no party to it.

**9th.** Several persons were killed following a clash between tribal chieftains and their followers across the N. W. F. border.

**10th.** Sir Henry Gidney deplored the tragic apathy of Anglo-Indians as evidenced by poor support of the Association safeguarding their interests.

The Moslem League's Central Parliamentary Board published a manifesto defining its aims.



13th. Although far from satisfied with the measure of autonomy granted in the new constitution the Moslem League would use the scheme to further their objective of full and complete Home Rule in India.

13th. Three persons were killed when the Jaipur police fired on a mob of Gujar.

Dr. S. K. Mukherjee of Lucknow University suggested the introduction of a system of inter-communal marriages with a view to settling the differences between Hindus and Moslems.

Following demonstrations by students a strong police guard was posted outside the Bombay University building.

15th. The Government of India decided to dispense with the Tariff Board and orders communicating this decision were sent to the President and members of the Board.

17th. The Madras Government constituted a Provincial Economic Council to advise the various Government departments regarding the economic and educational advancement of the people.

The need for trained teachers in Bengal was stressed by Mr. S. P. Mukherjee, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, when he addressed a number of teachers who had completed their training course.

19th. The value of research work in India was stressed by the Viceroy when he opened the first meeting of the Nutrition Advisory Board at Simla.

20th. The Government of India consulted all local interests concerned as to the advisability of widening the scope of control of the mining industry to conserve the country's coal assets and more economical working.

22nd. Orthodox and Socialist Congressmen at Bombay expressed diametrically opposite views in a report advocating ways of establishing contact with "the masses."

Mr. Jinnah was severe in his criticism of U. P. Moslem leaders who changed their minds about serving on the Central Parliamentary Board he planned to set up.

A vigorous defence of the new Moslem United Party was made by the Hon. Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin, Member of the Executive Council, when he addressed a Moslem meeting in Darjeeling.

23rd. In celebration of His Majesty the King-Emperor's birthday, a parade was held in Simla when the Viceroy took the salute. A Birthday Parade was also held on the Calcutta maidan.

25th. The Government of India accepted the recommendations of the Special Tariff Board in regard to the reduction of duty on certain types of cotton piecegoods.

26th. Bengal Hindus sent a memorial to the Secretary of State for India, urging greater representation for their community in the new legislatures.

An attack on the Justice Party was made by Mr. S. Satyamurthi in a speech at Congress House, Madras.

27th. A scheme calculated to improve the quality of recruitment to the University Training Corps and to promote enthusiasm among students of the University for military training was adopted by the Senate of the Calcutta University.

29th. Serious floods occurred at many centres in North India and the rainfall at Delhi established a record for this period of the year.

The Government of India decided to create a Central Dairy Husbandry Department and outlined plans to develop the industry.

Suggestions for relieving unemployment amongst the educated classes were made by Mr. J. Aiman at the conference of Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A. held at Madras.

# Administration of India 1936

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Shah; Khan Bahadur Muhammad

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Bahadur Haji Mir Alladed Khan Mir

Imam Bakh Khan Talpur; Mir

Dandehali Khan Mir Muhammad

Hassan Khan Talpur; Mr. Satramdas

Sakhawatrai Tolani.

To assist the Governor "in such

manner as may be prescribed by

him in that behalf"—Sir Shah Nawaz

Khan Ghulam Murtaza Khan Bhutto

Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E., and Diwan Bahadur

Hiranand Khemsing.

**Notes on Indian History**  
**and**  
**India in Home Polity**

## Notes on Indian History

It has truly been said that a history of India that reveals the whole panorama of the vast millennia of her distinctive life and civilisation in its actual shade and colour and due proportion and perspective, still remains to be written. The materials for drawing such a vast outline and making such a comprehensive and connected sketch are not yet in hand. A fairly definite outline and connected sketch which gives the promise of being some day developed into what is called "scientific history", has, however, been steadily emerging out of the mist that veils the immensity of India's past—a mist which (thanks to the labours of the investigators) has perceptibly thinned without being as yet actually lifted as far as one can now make one's incursion into the age that saw the birth of Buddhism and Jainism in India in the sixth century B. C. Beyond that there is still only "cosmic nebulae" relieved here and there by a few stray constellations of lucidly distinct historical facts. These "nebulae" have, probably, a depth and density to be measured only in terms of millennia. But from the position where we can now make our historical prospecting, these vast remote dark spaces of Indian history recede and shrink and fold up and, at last, look like a far-away blank, black spherule beyond the galaxy of human remembrance.

Ancient Indian history is, apparently, "full" of such gaps and blanks. Beyond the time when Alexander the Great invaded the Punjab (326 B. C.), the galactical system of detailed and authentic Indian history does not far extend. There are too many unexplored blank spaces and unformed, chaotic nebulae beyond that time still. Beginning approximately with that period, we are furnished, sometimes in abundance, with fairly trustworthy material in the shape of contemporary Greek testimony bearing on Indian history, and also, as time rolls on, with inscriptional and other kinds of decipherable and dependable domestic evidence. Of course, an immense mass of "documentary" evidence and evidence in the more or less fluid, volatile state of tradition, hearsay and folk-lore (written or unwritten) have always lain by the side of the historian hitherto busy with his inscriptions, plates, coins, artefacts and any corroborative evidence that may be forthcoming from outside. And that mass of ancient Indian documentary evidence and tradition has, generally, lain neglected by his side. It has been, generally, of little help to him in reconstructing, "on scientific lines", the missing skeleton of ancient Indian history. It has been, however, of great use to the comparative mythologist, philologist and anthropologist.

But even the historian who seeks to reconstruct on scientific lines the missing skeleton of ancient history, whether of India or of any other country, should do well to remember that the dry bones of the skeleton he may have been able to put together will not be true, living history unless they can be made distinct with the touch of life which literature, art, tradition, 'myths', folk-lore, religious and social institutions in their earlier and later forms alone can give. From coins, tablets etc. we can build a possible or even probable frame-work of chronology into which we can put our little bits of tested facts according to one possible plan or other. Such a mosaic of dates and facts (mainly relating to dynastic succession, wars and conquests) is of course important as a necessary ground-plan of history. But it is not the completed structure of history. It is not history as an organic process of evolution. So we have to distinguish between structural or morphological history and organic, "physiological" history.

Now, India has been so far poor in comparison with some other ancient countries like Egypt, Babylonia and China in her "materials" for writing the first kind of history, and the available materials, as we saw, do not carry us much beyond the time of Buddha and Mahavira in the sixth century B. C. Recently, however, a very old and, apparently, a high order of civilisation has been unearthed in the Indus Valley in the Punjab and in Sind, which, according to current official beliefs, is of the Sumerian pattern. The buried cities now discovered bring to light not only very interesting features of a civilisation thriving in the western part of India in so remote a past (when the Indo-Aryans had not, according to the common view, yet migrated into India), but they even put into our hands interesting clues that may eventually help us to unravel many of the riddles of our Vedic and post-Vedic history. The Tantrik cult, for instance, may have older and deeper roots in the soil of India than have so far been granted or suspected. Nothing contemporaneous with or earlier than the Indus Valley civilisation has yet been unearthed in other parts of the subcontinent. So the present trend of speculation is to regard the Indus Valley civilisation as a sort of wedge driven into western India—the whole of which was still at the low level of aboriginal darkness (with the possible exception of some parts that might have risen to the Dravidian 'light' level)—probably by the races and civilisation of Sumer.

We are still in the duskland of probabilities or even less than probabilities as to the dates, origins, early habitats and earlier forms not only of the Indus Valley but also of the Dravidian and Indo-Aryan peoples. We do not know for certainty when and from where the Indo-Aryans came into India. The fact of Aryan immigration into India itself, though generally accepted, is still disputed. And if immigration be admitted, we have, probably, to admit not one but several successive streams of immigration. Such a theory, apparently called for to account for some of the critical turnings and "sudden mutations" in our ancient historical evolution, will lead to many unexplored avenues of enquiry as to ages and dates, origins and characteristics.

### THE RIGVEDA

The Rigveda—the earliest and the most informing (and instructive "documentary" evidence that we possess—appears to set the stage amidst scenes which show the Aboriginal, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan factors fighting for supremacy first in the land of "Five Rivers" and in the Ganges Valley, and then gradually, beyond the Vindhya Range which with its impenetrable forest mantle, stood as a barrier between Northern India (Aryavatta) and Deccan. Gradually we find the aborigines cornered and driven to the hills and forest where their descendants, more or less Aryanised, still continue to live. In considerable parts, they were also absorbed into the fold of Aryan society and culture. And in being absorbed they did not fail to impart some little part of their own character to the Aryan complex. There was not so much of racial or even linguistic fusion as of cultural assimilation. This process of Aryanisation in language, culture etc. has been a process admitting, naturally, of different shades and degrees, leaving at the one end aboriginal races that have almost kept aloof from Aryan influence and having at the other others that have become part and parcel of the Aryan system. The Aryanisation of the Dravidian peoples, especially in religion, culture and civilisation, has been a much more perfected process. But, on the other hand, the Dravidian impress on the Aryan system is also, in many places, deep and unmistakable. The Dravidian is co-ordinated or even subordinated to the Aryan but not lost in the latter. This power of assimilation of alien races and cultures without losing the individuality of its own essential Type or Pattern and without at the same time making the diverse elements assimilated lose whatever is essential in them—has been a special characteristic of the Indo-Aryan race and culture-complex. This has meant organic unity or unity in diversity of a more fundamental and abiding nature than can, perhaps, be claimed for the political or national unity with which historians are commonly familiar. Historians, accordingly, commonly miss the unity which lies deep and sees only the diversity which lies on the surface. India to them is thus a veritable chaos of jarring elements of races, languages, religions, castes, sects and culture which have never known unity before the days of the unitary political rule of the British. Of course the introduction, in later times, of the Semitic religions—Mahammedanism and Christianity—disturbed to some extent the ages-long unity and balance of the Aryo-Dravidian culture and social system in India. But even these elements were in the process of being slowly drawn into the sphere of influence of what we may call the Genius of India. In other words, a slow but sure process of cultural assimilation even of these "militant" factors was going apace. Buddhism, which had risen as a "revolt" against orthodox Hinduism—but yet as a revolt from within—and which dominated the situation in India for several centuries, ended in the land of its birth by being eventually absorbed and assimilated into the parent religion. Jainism and many other old or latter "revolts" have thus "squared their accounts" with the same parent religion, and have been for many centuries living peaceably side by side with one another and with the latter.

This power of assimilation and co-ordination in which all the components make their own contributions and are permitted to live side by side as members of a commonwealth of cultures, has been the secret of the wonderful resisting and staying power of the Indian culture-complex against such disintegrating forces as have smashed up many an old and glorious civilisation of the world. And it can be easily shown from facts that this staying power has been in evidence not only in the realm of cultural contacts and impacts but also in that of social and political ones. There have been many raids into India and invasions before and after Christ, but it is a travesty of facts to imagine that Indian resistance has always been weak and short-lived and that such invasions are typically like the raids of the Mahmud of Ghazni which ever swept away Indian armies and Kingdoms like cobweb or a house of cards. Before her final subjugation by the Mahammedan Power—and the final subjugation of the whole of India was anything like an accomplished fact only for a time during the reign of

the great Mogul Emperors—India had been, it should be borne in mind, a mighty Power and a Model of civilisation and culture for at least three thousand years. And it should be remembered further that, when the British in India turned from trade to conquest (always with native help and alliance) they had to settle their accounts with Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan in the South, but mainly the Maharatta and Sikh Powers which had risen on the ruins of the Mahammedan Power in India.

#### UNITARY INDIAN EMPIRE

But there were and still have been other factors which, to some extent, operated against India developing a compact and coherent political and military organisation, except occasionally, like, for instance, the great Roman Empire of old or the British Empire in modern times. We possess, apparently, no connected retrospect of the remote past of which the Vedas, Epics and Puranas speak. But as far as appearances go, an unitary, centralised Indian Empire was the exception and not the rule. In later times also, an Empire like that of Asoka was not a common achievement. As we said, India has possessed deep-laid cultural and institutional unity beneath all her diversities. India has fought, and fought bravely, for the integrity of her sacred Land, her sacred Religion and Tradition, and for their sacred visible Symbols and Embodiments. But she has rarely fought for the "State" as such or an Empire as such. The spirit of her culture did not favour the formation and consolidation of Nationalism in the sense it is commonly understood, and her basic institutions would hardly consist with many form of centralised State control. The all-controlling and co-ordinating Principle was *Dharma* (the Principle of human Values and Conduct) rather than any State agency. Each village, for example, was a self-contained commune and autonomous unit owing permanent allegiance to the reign of *Dharma* and only temporary allegiance to any kingship that might function for the time being. So the village communities continued to live though kingdoms after kingdoms rose and fell. They were but little affected by the accidents and exigencies of politics.

Again, the spirit of *Dharma* (which should not be translated as religion) has definitely and systematically favoured all human or even all-living values and tendencies and a cosmopolitan outlook, and has opposed militant, aggressive "predatory" nationalism. The old Upanishads are clear and courageous in their conception of those higher values; and the *Dharmashastras* (or Codes laying down social and individual conduct) were bold and consistent in their execution of those ideas. Later, Buddhism and Jainism and other "reforming" movements have tended only to stress such values as non-violence and fellowship with all men and all living beings. These forces operating through the ages tended to produce in the Indian classes and masses a common disposition not quite favourable to the formation and consolidation of an unitary military state for purposes of offence and defence.

Of the immense back-ground of Indian History which is represented by the Vedas (*Samhitas*, *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*), the various *Sutras* (or *Digests*), *Philosophies*, *Epics* (the *Ramayana* and *Mahavarata*), *Puranas* and *Tantras* (our statement here is not anything like full), we possess (unless one is prepared to grant the claim of the Puranas recently put forth in their behalf that they do contain materials for reconstructing a fairly connected chronological history beginning with the very earliest times) very little precise and connected information for the purpose of writing a political history both copious and correct as to facts and their chronological order. But of the ideals and ideas, practices and institutions of the times we do possess a very full, informing and instructive presentation. And, after all, what is real history but this? Scholars have been busy with their sketches and drawings of the ancient orders and specimens of ideas, beliefs and practices that existed in India. But oftener than not their reviews and retrospects have been made from modern standpoints, with modern notions, criteria and standards of testing facts and appraising values. This has not enabled us, in any just measure, to understand much less appreciate a Civilisation (not confined to India but, possibly, reaching some of its greatest heights in this country) which was essentially of a different kind, and cannot, therefore, be represented as only the first uncertain and timid steps taken on the road which has, through a long, long march, at last brought us to our present advanced stage. The ideology, plan and methods of that ancient civilisation we have yet not seriously studied and rightly understood. Much of that civilisation we still regard, without understanding, as consisting of "savage" magic, meaningless ritualism, theological twaddle and crude superstition. Side by side with all this we find, however, the highest philosophy, deepest mysticism and purest ethics. There is also much that is of original and genuine value from the point of view of human material

and mundane progress. This seems to us a curious medley of what is nearly the highest and what is about the lowest. But let us pass on.

Coming to "historical" times we find that the invasion by Alexander the Great of India proved in the result to be little more than a brilliant raid. His victorious armies could only cut off a small slice of North-Western India, and this little slice the Macedonian would ingest, but could not digest. His steam-roller of conquest speedily developed "war-weariness" on the plains of the Punjab, and he had to go back only adding a bit of India to his vast Empire. He had won some of his battles in India, but it had not been an "easy walk-over" with him.

#### CHANDRAGUPTA AND ASOKA

After his death shortly afterwards, the vast Macedonian Empire practically went to pieces. Chandragupta, who became the king of Magadha, proved himself too powerful for the Greek invaders who had violated the sanctity and integrity of the sacred Land of the Five Rivers. As the result of the formidable opposition by the armies of Chandragupta, a treaty was concluded between him and the Greek which made him the supreme, undisputed lord and sovereign of the Indian Empire. Megasthenes, who was sent by Seleucus as an ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, left a very valuable record of the times, of the customs and morals of the people, and of the administration, which, though unfortunately fragmentary, bears an eloquent and admiring testimony to the high order of material and moral civilisation attained by the Hindus centuries before the Christian era. And this high civilisation was evolved in India not in isolation but in commerce with other civilisations that flourished in ancient times such as the Babylonian, Greek, Persian and Chinese. Chandragupta's son was Bindusara who was succeeded by Asoka (269—231 B. C.), who was, undoubtedly, one of the greatest rulers of men holding their sway for the material and spiritual good of mankind. Numerous edicts and inscriptions record the noble and glorious achievements of his reign which, in its later stages, left the bloody path of war and conquest and devoted itself to the much more noble and fruitful task of the moral and spiritual conquest and redemption of ourselves and our fellow-beings. With commendable catholicity and tolerance, not seeking to impose it upon others by his great imperial authority and power, he exercised that authority and power for the purpose of transforming Buddhism, which had been more or less a local sect in the Ganges valley, into one of the greatest and most potent living world religions. Asoka's reign is therefore rightly held to be an epoch in the history of the world. His edicts also show the man, his ideals and his methods. But all this had not allowed or favoured the cement of the great Maurya Empire setting into the requisite hardness. Independent kingdoms like Bactria and Parthia took their rise in the border land, and the Greeks renewed their incursions. New races (the Yuen-chi) came in a surge of migration which swept all before them, and in the first century A. D. a considerable portion of North-west India came under their influence.

#### GUPTA DYNASTY

Kanishka, who made Peshawar his capital, proved great as a ruler and as a patron and missionary of the Buddhist religion. Under him the Kushan branch of the Yuen-chi reached the zenith of its power. But this power fell as another power in middle India rose—the Andhra dynasty. A peak like Amaravati or Ujjain would, sometime, rise and shine in the midst of the moving vastness of Indian waters. In the beginning of the fourth century the centre of political influence in India was again shifted to Pataliputra in Magadha as the Gupta dynasty emerged into power. Samudragupta, who ruled for fifty years, and his son Chandragupta, greatly distinguished themselves not only in war but in the sphere of peaceful and fruitful administration, promoting general prosperity and giving liberal encouragement to art and literature, a glorious tribute to which was paid by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien. According to his testimony, their Empires were vast and their administration just, enlightened. Towards the end of the fifth century—when the White Huns from Central India began to pour themselves into India—the sun of the Gupta dynasty set (during whose regime, it should be noted, there had been a revival and reconstruction of ancient Brahmanism and Brahmanical culture as evidenced especially by the literature of the Puranas; but this reviving process was, very largely, a process of quiet adaptation and peaceful assimilation). More than a century had elapsed after the fall of the Gupta dynasty before there rose another great and enlightened monarch who could emulate with no mean success the greatest of the Indian rulers in historical times—Asoka. Emperor Harsha, who consolidated his authority practically over the whole of Northern India in the beginning



of the seventh century, was famous equally for his great prowess, his high intellectual attainments and for the broad catholicity of his religious outlook. An account of his times has been left by a Chinese, Huen Tsiang by name. In that, India is still painted in generally bright and even glowing colours.

#### MEDIAEVAL INDIA

After the death of Harsha, and gradually with the emergence of India into what may be called the mediaeval period, the conditions which had made the political unification of India sometimes possible in the past, nearly disappeared, and India was thrown into a state of political confusion and chaos in which petty kingdoms rose like mushrooms and constant internecine strife prevailed. Some outstanding figures like Vikramaditya would occasionally appear on the stage; but such events were few and far between. In the South of India was being enacted a very interesting but involved drama in which the Andhras, Pallavas, Chalukyas and Cholas were the principal actors. Kashmir in the north, Kanauj in the Doab and Bengal in the east were also alive with many vivid and vital scenes and events of political, cultural and social interest. But we shall not try to make a review of them here. One outstanding event in the confusion and complexity of the general Indian situation which deserves notice even in passing was the rise of the Rajput power upon which the mantle of the old caste of Kshatriyas (the warrior and ruling caste) fell, and which was the chief opposition that the waves of Mahomedan invasion coming one after another ever since the second quarter of the 7th. century had to encounter and ultimately bear down. Gujarat, Malwa, Ajmer, Kanauj and Delhi were the principal scenes of the new drama of Rajput ascendancy—a drama so full of episodes of superhuman bravery, noble heroism and sacrifice for the sacred cause of religion and liberty that they have ever since lived in human memory as models which future generations of patriots in any country might well try to emulate. Though Rajput opposition was borne down in Northern India by the end of the twelfth century, Rajput bravery and the spirit that animated it survived the crash of the Hindu Empire of Delhi and Ajmere over which Prithvi Raj, the hero, the last of the Hindu emperors, though not the last of the Hindu rulers, had held sway. Rajput bravery and Rajput love of independence were still factors to reckon with in the days of the great Moghuls—Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Col. Todd and some others have narrated the story, and it constitutes one of the proudest annals in the vast archives of the Hindu glory in India. As to the conquest of Northern India by the Mohammedans, it should be noted, the great prize was not very easily or quickly won; that the first Mohammedan impact was in the seventh century shortly after the passing away of the Prophet, and a Mohammedan kingdom in Northern India came into being towards the end of the 12th century. Even this did not mean either a complete or a final subjugation of India. And there is another thing to be noted. Hindu Power fell not because its resistance was weak and its opposition timid, but because it did not possess sufficient compactness, and its bravery and heroism in the field was not backed by adequate tact, strategy and discipline in diplomacy, planning and preparation.

The centuries of the mediaeval age in India were marked by a conspicuous lack of political unity and solidarity. But they were by no means unimportant and barren. It was not a "dark" Age. In the Gupta period and in the centuries before and after, a marvellous process of social, cultural and religious reconstruction was going apace. The old Vedic scheme of social economy (involving as it did the four Varnas or "castes" and the four Ashramas or "stages" of life) was being transformed through a process of adaptation, assimilation and multiplication which made society more comprehensive and at the same time more complex. The influence of Buddhism, Hellenism and that of the Mongoloid races also led to adaptations and assimilations in many important directions in the older order of Indian customs and institutions. The gradual assimilation of Buddhism itself was a phenomenon of the greatest importance. The Vedic religion survived but it was transformed. The Puranas and Tantras renewed and gave a new expression to the Sanatana Dharma. In the domain of literature, art (both useful and fine), science and mathematics, philosophy and metaphysics, these centuries were also productive of fruits that were and still are of the greatest interest and value. Great poets like Kalidas and Bhavabhuti, and great philosophers like Shankaracharya and Ramanuja, and also other pioneers and masters in other fields, formed a galaxy of men of genius and talents which showed that an age of political dis-equilibrium and confusion in India was yet not necessarily an age of cultural depression and darkness and social disruption. The soul of India could, apparently, function to its best advantage in spite of her troubled politics.

But whilst this was true for some time it could not be true for all time. Her politics at last began to tell on her constitution. We do not, however, propose to continue the story through the Mohammedan and British periods. The history of these periods is more settled and definite in features, and these are, generally, well-known. One special feature, which is not always clearly recognised and to which we should like to draw attention, is this. From the twelfth century right up to the eighteenth, or even for some time later, the Hindu power of revival and regeneration; of initiation and exaltation, was never like dead or even dying. Independent and often powerful kingdoms like Vijayanagar in the South, those of Pratab, Shivaji and the Peshwas in the west (we do not mention some others e. g. those in Bengal) would, now and then, proudly lift their heads and challenge the authority of the great Moslem emperors. Under that authority, too, there flourished many great Hindu administrators, ministers, governors, generals and financiers. In short, during the Mohammedan era the Hindu genius was not at its best, but it was not quite decadent.

#### THE MOHAMMEDAN RULE

The Mohammedan conquerors, again, from Mahomed Ghori who wrested the sceptre of the kingdom of Delhi from Prithviraj after a first unsuccessful attempt, came to India as foreigners but they did not remain here as foreigners. India was the land of their adoption. Raids like those of Chengis Khan or Nadir Shah were rare and they did not represent the normal course of events. India suffered, and sometimes badly, no doubt, from the effects of the conquering ardour and proselytising zeal of some of the Mohammedan rulers. But the Great Moghuls were as much "children of the soil" as the humblest of the Hindu "heathens". And this sharing together by the Hindus and Mussalmans of a common "hearth and home" naturally tended to breed a consciousness of community of interests in both as India's offspring. There was a steady assimilation of the Semitic and Indo-Aryan cultures also and even a growing understanding and appreciation of one religion by the other. The religions touched and even blended with each other at their highest points—e. g. in Sufism and Vedantic mysticism. They also met and evolved a broad common "shrine" to which folk beliefs, practices and institutions would bring their united homage. Even a common dialect (Urdu or Hindusthani) was evolved between the two in Northern India which gradually blossomed into a fine literature. The patronage extended by the Mohammedan emperors to Music, Architecture etc. was also fruitful of very fine results. India's wealth attracted the trade and commerce of the whole civilised world. In fact, America or the West Indies was discovered in an attempt to discover an western route to the Indian market. British, French, Dutch and Portuguese traders all came and scrambled for market, and eventually, for political power in India. It is also worthy of note that even under the sway of such masterful monarchs as Sher Shah, Akbar or Aurangzeb, the government of the country was in the main, decentralised, allowing provincial and local autonomy—down to the autonomy of the village units—to adequately function. Even petty local chiefs—like the feudal lords of the mediaeval West—never unlearned the art of fighting and governing. So it was always possible for a man of ambition and ability, like Shivaji for example, to evolve sanctions whereby he could implement his high political aspirations. It was the very large measure of local autonomy and local initiative that existed that rendered possible the rise of the Marhatta and Sikh Powers and also of the kingdoms of Hyder Ali and the Nizam in the south. And British Power in India in its rise to paramountcy found its most formidable rivals or powerful allies in them.

In 1599, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, some merchants of London formed an association for the purpose of trade with India, and this association was granted a royal charter of incorporation. At first this Company was purely a trading concern establishing factories in the east and west coasts of India and in Bengal and administering its affairs in the three "presidencies", which were at first independent of one another but subordinate to the Board of Directors at home. In course of time, however, chiefly with a view to preserving and consolidating its growing and extensive trade in India, in the face of the French rivalry and intrigue and the prevailing political anarchy and unrest in the land, it established military garrison of defence which soon became involved in hostilities that saddled it with territorial responsibilities. It fought some decisive battles in Madras and in Bengal, which raised a trading company to the status of a political Power in India. French intrigue failed and French rivalry practically died down in India. One of the most decisive battles fought was the battle of Plassey in 1757. The battle was won with the aid of faithful native battalions, and with the active or passive support of the generals and noblemen of the unfortunate young Nawab of Bengal. It is worthy

of note that the path of British supremacy in India, and often, its influence and prestige abroad, has been paved, amongst other things, with the consent, alliance and willing co-operation of the Natives of India. It was so even during the critical period of the Sepoy Mutiny, one hundred years after the battle of Plassey. It was again so during the "ordeal" of the last Great War. The machinery of administration by the East India Company was from time to time modified by Acts of Parliament (1773, 1784; and the Charter Acts of 1793 and 1833). By these a Governor-General-in-Council was made the supreme administrative authority in India subject to a Board of Control at home. By the last Act, the Company ceased to be a commercial concern and became a political and administrative body only. After the Sepoy Mutiny another Act was passed by which the Government of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown, and henceforth, the Governor-General was also the Viceroy of India. The functions of the Government of India are wide and its responsibilities heavy. But its responsibilities are to the Crown and the Parliament. It has not rested on an elective popular basis. There have been legislative bodies, but its motions, resolutions and votes have not, except as regards certain matters of secondary importance under the Act of 1919, a binding effect on the Government.

India's contributions and sacrifices in the Great War were great, but the "reward" that came in the shape of the Parliamentary Declaration promising her "a progressive realisation of responsible government", the stages and times of which were to be determined by the Parliament alone, was not comforting to her nationalist aspirations. And the Government of India Act of 1919, which is still in actual function though it has been, apparently, broadened and amplified in some directions by a recent Parliamentary Statute, did not meet the wishes or expectations of India. By that Act dyarchy or a kind of dual responsibility was established in the provinces, where the "nation-building" subjects were "transferred" to Ministers (not responsible however to the legislatures), whilst the more important subjects were "reserved". In practice the transference of certain subjects to Ministers (who were appointed by, held office under the pleasure of, and were responsible to, the Governor) meant little more than a complication of the administrative machinery which became, in consequence, more cumbersome and expensive. The Central Government continued to remain unitary under the scheme. The legislative bodies, both provincial and central, were expanded with non-official majorities, but this placed little power, for construction or even for obstruction, in the hands of the popular parties. Whilst the liberals proceeded to work the scheme, the main body of nationalist forces, as represented by the Indian National Congress, would not at first even look at it. But some time later, under the guidance of Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, a Swaraj Party, analogous to the present Congress Parliamentary Party, was formed which entered the legislatures, both provincial and central, in telling numbers, and by its obstructionist tactics caused not a little embarrassment to those entrusted with the work of day to day administration. In some provinces it was even able to "wreck" dyarchy for a time. Generally, however, the system has worked, though not satisfactorily even according to official appreciation. We need not in particular refer to the unwelcome labours of the All-White Statutory Simon Commission, to which even the habitually co-operating liberals refused to lend their co-operation. Meanwhile the Congress ideology was becoming bolder day by day, and the Lahore session adopted a resolution setting as the goal of India complete Independence or Purna Swaraj. A campaign of civil disobedience followed to create "sanctions under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi who has been really at the helm of Congress affairs since the early twenties. The Round Table idea was breached rather too late; but Mahatma Gandhi, after concluding what is known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, joined the Conference subsequently. The results of the deliberations of that body fell short of the Congress demand. And the Congress again withdrew its offer of co-operation.

# INDIA IN HOME POLITY

## INTRODUCTION

On the 28th. December, 1935, the Indian National Congress completed fifty years of its life. On that date in 1885, 72 men from different parts of India, speaking different languages, "Golden Jubilee" wearing different dresses, guided by differing traditions, of the assembled in the Gokuldas Tejpal Pathshala Hall in Congress Bombay to evolve an unity of life, thought and conduct out of the diversities of Indian life—an India, one, whole, and indivisible. Starting out as a thin stream like unto that which one witnesses at the Gongotri in the heart of the Himalayas, the Indian Renaissance of the 19th. century, precipitated by methods of British administration and enlightenment, has broadened out, as the Ganges has done, into a mighty stream. by contributions from various movements of awakening and uplift from right and left. And, from out of the abundant flow of its sweeping life newer channels of activity have been cut to irrigate and enrich hitherto untapped and unorganised centres of life. The Indian National Congress represents one such channel of awakened life.

On the occasion of the "Golden Jubilee" of the Congress the story of its rise and growth has been broadcasted far and wide both in and outside the country. Leaders of thought, orators and speakers, ministers of nationalism, authors and journalists have sought to bring out of the storied past the life-work of the men and women who laid out the roads on which the present generation walk with more assurance and intrepidity. This new courage and wider vision has been generated and acquired as the result of the spade work of men and women, Indian and European, who are to-day only a memory of far-off things, but to whom belonged the credit of the New India that has risen over the consciousness of our people.

Some glimpses of the developments that have culminated in the Indian National Congress should find a place in the pages of the "Indian Annual Register", if the problems which at present confound the intelligence of men in our country were to be understood and properly handled and solved. For this purpose it would be necessary to hark back to the early days of "John" Company, and trace the processes and effects of the various measures of consolidation and enlightenment adopted by the new rulers of the country. Rajput and Marhatta had wrecked the Moghul empire, but were themselves wrecked when they clashed against the might and wit of the British. This process had been completed by 1818. The Moslem Nawabs and governors of provinces who offered less than lip-service to the Emperor at Delhi and set up practically independent kingdoms did not show better stamina or fight. The Khalsa organised by the Sikhs was as unsuccessful. The conquest of India was almost a walk-over, if we are to trust to the words of

British  
Conquest of  
India

Sir John Seeley who said that the British acquired India in a "fit of absent-mindedness". However, an organisation of traders, of "factors and clerks" became rulers of the country. Capture of political power by a foreign people is no mere transfer of ruling authority from the hands of one set of people to those of another. It entails revolutionary changes in every department in the life of the subject population. With all the good-will in the world the new rulers cannot help affecting and influencing the life and thought of the ruled, in undermining, unknowingly and imperceptibly perhaps, their social usages, economic institutions and organizations. The self-interest of the ruling race may also consciously work to this end. Their conceit of superiority and contempt for the subject people and for the weaknesses of their social life that had led to their defeat—both these feelings impel them instinctively to ignore or minimise any virtue that may inform the thought and conduct of the people under their rule. This has been the universal experience in the relationship between the rulers and the ruled when they happen to be aliens to one another. The foreign rulers are ignorant; the subject people is ever afraid. Ignorance and fear give a twist to the relation between the two which no generosity or good-will can straighten out or set right. This unnatural state of things causes material and spiritual losses to both the parties which it has been the duty of statesmanship to seek to make good. Indo-British relation has been passing through this test these one hundred and seventy-five years.

When the East India Company got a foot-hold in the country **From Trader as rulers of particular patches in it, their officers had to Ruler no time to think of anything else than "getting rich quick".** The result is expressed in Dean Inge's words :

"The first impetus (to the industrial revolution in Britain) was given by the plunder of Bengal which, after the victories of Clive, flowed into the country in a broad stream for about thirty years. This ill-gotten wealth played the same part in stimulating England's industries as the "five milliards" exorted from France did for Germany after 1870".

While enriching themselves by all manner of means, the Company's officers did not bother themselves with the internal administration of the country. The first shock that roused the British people to their responsibilities as rulers in India was the famine of 1769-70 which swept away more than a crore of people, a third of the entire population of the province of Bengal. The famine played havoc in the western districts of Bengal proper and the eastern districts of Bihar. The decrease in the population did not lower the land-revenue demands of the Company; and from Warren Hastings to Lord Cornwallis, for about twenty years, it was one long-drawn effort to make the Zamindar and "farmers" of revenue pay up—proof of which is indirectly afforded by Sir William Hunter's description of an ideal Collector—"The realisation of revenue formed the Collector's paramount duty, and on his success in this respect rather than on the prosperity of the people, his reputation as an officer depended". The administrative policy indicated above was changed by the Permanent Settlement of land revenue with which is associated the name of Lord Cornwallis. It precipitated a revolution in the social and economic life of the

province which has come home to roost after more than one hundred and thirty years.

The famine of 1769-70 had caused 'the ruin of two-thirds of the old Disintegration of aristocracy of Lower Bengal'. To the rest, somehow Economic Life existing, Lord Cornwallis' land settlement dealt a death-blow, so to say. In the Bengal Administration Report of 1872-73, the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Campbell, recalls these facts :

"The Government demand was then one which left a margin of profit, but small compared with that given to Zemindars in modern days. There was wide-spread default in the payment of the Government dues, and extensive consequent sales of estates or parts of estates for recovery of arrears under the unbending system introduced in 1793. In 1796-97, lands bearing a total revenue of sikka Rs. 14, 18, 756 were sold for arrears of revenue, and, in 1797-98, the revenue of land so sold amounted to sikka Rs. 22,74,076. By the end of the century the greater portions of the estates of the Nadiya, Rajshahi, Bishanpur, and Dinajpur Rajas had been alienated. The Burdwan estate was seriously crippled, and the Birbhum Zamindari was completely ruined. A host of smaller zamindars shared the same fate. In fact, it is scarcely too much to say that within the ten years that followed the Permanent Settlement a complete revolution took place in the constitution and ownership of the estates which formed the subject of the settlement".

The smaller fry fared no better. The resumption of "Lakheraj" lands formed part of the Cornwallis Settlement (1793); in 1819 the net was drawn tighter, the process completing in 1828, when the small-est of the spawns could not and did not escape.

The same story of dispossession and relinquishment can be found in the Ryotwari tracts in Madras and Bombay. Letters and remonstrances from the Company's officials addressed to the Court of Directors in London bear witness to the havoc created all over. Colonel Munro (later Sir Thomas, Governor of Madras) is credited with being the inaugurator of the Ryotwari system of land revenue settlement. His opinion on his own system should be regarded as final judgment. He said that the Ryotwari assessment was "considerably higher than it ought to be, and higher than it ever had been, or than could be realized as long as there are bad crops and poor Ryots"; to protect the interest of the Government in the assessment involved "continual interference with the cultivators, and a constant exercise of domiciliary control." In a particular report (dated 25th August, 1805) he stated that "if every restraint on their (Ryots') inclination were removed, they would probably throw up one-fourth of the land in cultivation."

Thus between the Zemindari and the Ryotwari settlements was the economic life of the people, based on land, disorganised.

Side by side, the industries of the country were being submerged under the flood of machine-made goods entering the country under the aegis of an administration which was a trading and profiteering institution as well. The Indian indigenous textile, ship-building and other "luxury" industries were ruined. Cotton piece-goods sent from India to Great Britain fell from 1,266, 608 pieces in 1814 to 356,086 in 1835; while British cotton exports to India rose from 8,18,208 yards in 1814 to 5,17,77,277 yards in 1835. The same story of fall and rise is registered in the value of cotton goods exported and imported. In 1815 India sent cotton goods of the value of above 2 crores rupees to Britain, and in 1832 of the value of 15 lakhs only. As against

Ruin of Indian  
Arts and  
Industries

## THE INDIAN ANNUAL REGISTER

this, Britain exported to India in 1815 cotton goods to the value of 4 lakhs only; in 1832 the figure rose to rupees 60 lakhs. Deprived of State patronage or protection the ship-building industry in India could not stand the competition of Britain. Ramesh Chandra Dutt records in his "India in the Victorian Age" the progressive decline of the industry.

"In 1795-'96 six ships were built in Calcutta with tonnage of 4105 tons, and five large vessels of 500 to 600 tons were on the stocks.

In 1797-'98 several vessels were launched from the dock-yards of Calcutta."

By the middle of the 19th. Century the industry had become subject for historical research in Calcutta and Chittagong, the other part of the province.

The ruin of Indian industries through the pressure of the "new industrialism" of the ruling power in the country is illustrative of the tendency of things and not exhaustive of the full story. The statistics that have been quoted above appear so precise and natural. But it requires an effort of imagination at this distance of time to translate them into terms of flesh and blood, to recapture the condition of unemployment, misery, sickness of body and soul of millions of men, women and children. Speaking of an identical development in Britain itself as a result of the first onslaught of Industrialism on her institutions, a historian writes: "It is a piteous story, this of the quick, unprepared, unsoftened transformation of a people's life....." But in the case of Britain the law of compensation had opportunity to work in "the wealth and glory of the few and the misery of the many". As pioneer in the use of steam in the textile and iron manufacturing industries, and its application to land and sea carriage, Britain became the greatest imperial nation in the world, which position she held unchallenged almost to the cataclysmic years of the Great War (1914-1918). The grandeur and glory of an imperial destiny secured by a tiny island in North Atlantic reconciled the many to the deprivations and privations of their lives, and blinded the privileged few to the "England of the poor", to the "black abyss which lay under the surface of England's wealth". Both the few and the many in India had none of these consolations and compensations.

The revenue and economic policies pursued by the East India Company under the inspiration of British ideas and the dictation of British interests disrupted India's social and economic institutions. A certain measure of breakdown was inevitable under the circumstances. And, to the historian passing in review these developments a hundred years after, both the rulers and the ruled appear to be helpless victims of the impersonal forces of social and economic evolution. In the case of our rulers, however, they could not build better than they knew. Thinking British institutions the best for the purpose of an ordered society, they imported them wholesale, ignorant of, and ignoring and disturbing the social equilibrium and the hierarchy of economic arrangements that held up society in India. The men of the generation who pioneered these measures in this country knew not or had forgotten how in their own country "the commonwealth of farmers" had been usurped by

Identical Develop-  
ments in Britain  
and India

landlords enclosing "common lands", entailing great social changes, thus described by Prof. Ramsay Muir :

"The big landlords were adding field after field, the small holders were slowly disappearing. English rural society was ceasing to be the homogeneous society without sharp cleavages between class and class,.....a gulf was gradually opening between a mass of landless labourers on the one hand, and on the other a group of great landholders and class of capitalist farmers."

The social effect of the Cornwallis Settlement partakes of something of this character, as recognised as early as 1829 by Sir Edward Colebrooke :

"The errors of the Permanent Settlement were two-fold ; first, in the sacrifice of what may be denominated the *peasantry*, by merging all village-rights, whether of property or of occupancy in the all-devouring recognition of the Zamindar's permanent property in the soil ; and, secondly, in the sacrifice of the peasantry by one sweeping enactment, which left the Zamindar to make his settlement with them on such terms as he might choose to require".

The breakdown in the "communal" system of economic organization that had prevailed in our country and which had been represented by the craft-guilds, threw men on their own resources, deprived them of the protection of the joint family system which was a sort of non-official unemployment provision ; it exposed the people to the competition of all the world, a world of industries, employing a new and un-understood technique of production and distribution, the ramifications of which few could understand, and fewer control or regulate. Faced by such a situation Indian arts, industries and crafts dwindled silently, and the artisans followed the same fate without protest. The social and economic effects of the measures started under the auspices of our new rulers stare us in the face to-day ; and rulers and ruled loudly lament the decay of industry and increasing pressure on the land, speak of rural disintegration as major problems of India's economic and social life. This is how history revenges herself on men's pretensions to wisdom. This is the rhythm of history.

The economic break-down had repercussions on the social life of the people. Some of these measures were inevitable for purposes of consolidation of the power and interests of the new rulers. But even for that purpose, not only was the Policy of *Enlightenment* supine and passive acquiescence of the subject population necessary, their enlightened co-operation was sought to be enlisted as well. To this problem of enlightenment the East India Company turned their attention with great hesitation and much misgiving. Till 1813, they "did not recognise the promotion of education among the natives of India as part of its duty or concern". For, to quote Monier-Williams, "the rulers feared the evil consequences of education for the ruled, and the ruled anticipated no good results for themselves". The rulers and the ruled could not forget that they were "separated by almost every conceivable circumstance of alienation", to quote the words from an address presented to Lord William Bentinck. They ruled over them and "trafficked" with the people, but did not understand them, nor did the ruled understand the character of the rulers. In circumstance like these "the dangerous consequence to our power in this country from



imparting instruction to the natives" was hotly debated among Englishmen, in Britain and India. Apart from political considerations the authorities were apprehensive that any system of education initiated by them or conducted by missionaries eager to utilize educational institutions as a potent means of conversion to Christianity might create irremediable dissatisfaction and complications. But the time forces were fighting against their fears and policies. On the occasion of the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813, a clause was inserted in the Act which is regarded as "the first legislative admission of the right of education in India to participate in the public revenues". For, by this time the rulers had been able to persuade themselves that they had a mission to carry out in this country, the mission of opening out the minds of the people of India to the great truths of their faith and culture to the mutual advantage of both the peoples. This faith finds expression in the following words found in the Charter Act of 1813 :

"It is the duty of this country to promote the introduction of useful knowledge and of religion and of moral improvement, and that facilities be offered by law to persons who are desirous of going to and remaining in India to accomplish this benevolent design".

The people of India had also by that time acknowledged the superiority of the ruling race in every department of action and knowledge. The upholders of the older native traditions among Hindus and Muslims could not throw up from among themselves any one who could challenge the pretensions of the ruling race ; they retired to their huts, leaving the moulding of the life and thought of their people to these new-comers. They nursed a conceit of superiority, it is true, but it lacked any strength of conviction, and was not supported by knowledge. The Hindus were the first to capitulate, body and soul ; the Moslems took another half a century to throw up their hands. On the threshold of this development stands Raja Ram Mohun Roy. The evolution of his mind and attitude towards British rule and all that it stood for may be accepted as representative of the generation that made India what it to-day is. That evolution is expressed in his own words :

".....I proceeded on my travels, and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond, the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of British Power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me,..... ; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made me tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants.....".

That generation accepted the logic of defeat, and agreed to be docile and apt pupils of the system introduced by the ruling race so that disciplined, organized, and regimented by it, they might in the fulness of time outgrow that system. The English biographer of Raja Ram Mohan Roy accepted this interpretation of the acquiescence

of the natives of India in British rule, when she (Miss Collet) wrote :

"The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind ; and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilisation inevitably involves. Here, again, he stands forth as the tribune and prophet of New India.

The opinion that British domination of India was a period of political tutelage persisted as far down as 1905. In Bankim Chandra's *Ananda-Mutt* this feeling and this opinion is expressed in vivid and compelling language ; in Gopal Krishna Gokhale's *Servant of India Society* British rule was accepted as a dispensation of Providence. Something of such a belief impelled Lord Macaulay to throw his weight and prestige to the initiation of the policy of Anglicizing education in India which, he hoped, would produce a race "Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect", who would, by the bond of obligation and gratitude, be the pillars of Britain's far-flung empire, the dusky standard-bearers of her mission to the East.

What he said in depreciation of the learning and intellectual heritage of the East—of a shelf of European books containing more knowledge than the whole host of Eastern manuscripts—has kept up an estrangement which must have been his purpose to bridge over. The maiden belief of the early British Liberals in the supreme efficacy of European science and culture and their right of free entrance to every country irrespective of the wishes and inclinations of the peoples concerned was still green when Macaulay perpetrated that bombast ; he forgot that the Indian mind was not "a blank sheet of paper on which anything could be written by any man". A century later the effects of that forgetfulness is being sought to be neutralized by proposals of educational reconstruction which are "designed.....to adapt the whole system (of education) in (to ?) the social and economic back-ground of the people", to quote the words of a Bengal Government Resolution 1935, presaging a new orientation to popular education in the province. But when in 1835 Lord William Bentick's government declared that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science amongst the natives of India" and that "all the funds appropriated for purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone", they believed that the education of the higher classes must have precedence over that of the masses ; it was hoped that the former, their minds illumined by the new enlightenment and liberalised by it, would carry and transfer the light that they had received and benefitted from to the cottages of their neighbours. Sir Charles Wood's Despatch of 1854 which historians call the "charter" of education in India called for a re-consideration of Indo-British education policy by acknowledging that there had been "too exclusive a direction of the efforts of the Government towards providing the means of acquiring a very high degree of education for a smaller number of natives of India drawn for the most part from what we should here call the higher classes." Since that

time Indian education has zig-zagged between the claims of the classes and the needs of the masses.

We have been taught to believe that the initiation of what may be called the Macaulay-Bentick scheme of education was a great step forward in popularizing modern education in India. Rather, it should be regarded as a few steps backwards, perhaps with the intention of a bigger jump forward. For history, facts recorded in the "Journals" and reports of the early British historians and enquirers show that when the British were laying the foundations of their rule in this country in the second half of the 18th. century and the first two decades of the 19th., the whole country was studded over with institutions for primary and higher education. The English found in India a wide-spread system of elementary and higher education, of which the former was mainly practical, and the latter mainly literary, philosophical and religious", writes F. W. Thomas. Results of enquiries initiated by Sir Thomas Munro, as Governor of Madras in 1821, show that "in a population of 1,28,50,941, there were actually 1,84,170 students (.....probably about 10 per cent of the population of school-going age) attending schools, besides those who received instruction at home". These enquiries were held at a time when "the earlier tradition of national education was almost dead". In a Minute by Lord William Bentick dated 20th January, 1835, suggesting the desirability of an enquiry into "the actual state of Native education, that is, of that which is carried on, as it probably has been for centuries, entirely under Native management", appears the following: ".....that in 1823 there existed in the Madras territories no less than 12,498 institutions for education, supported partly by the endowments of Native Princes, but chiefly by the voluntary contributions of the people". Bengal and Behar had a similar tale to tell. Mr. W. Adam was commissioned to take a survey of educational facilities in Bengal and Behar. In his first report submitted in 1835, he speaks of "Indigenous Elementary Schools" as follows:

"By this description are meant those schools in which instruction in the elements of knowledge is communicated, and which have been originated and supported by the Natives themselves, in contra-distinction from those that are supported by Religious or Philanthropic Societies. The number of such schools in Bengal is supposed to be very great. A distinguished member of the General Committee of Public Instruction in a minute on the subject expressed the opinion that if one rupee per mensem were expended on each existing village schools in the Lower Provinces, the amount would probably fall little short of 12 lakhs of rupees per annum. This supposes that there are 1,00,000 such schools in Bengal and Behar, and assuming the population of those two provinces to be 4,00,00,000 there would be a village school for every 400 persons".

In the absence of any available data to determine the proportion of school-going children, or of children capable of going to schools, or of children of the age at which, according to the custom of the country, it is usual to go to school, the writer of the report instituted a comparison between conditions in Prussia where a census had been taken, and those in Bengal and Behar to arrive at some reliable figures of the juvenile student population of the latter. He found that in a population 1,22,56,725 in Prussia, the number of

children capable of receiving education was 19,22,000, three-sevenths of the number of children under fourteen years of age. This gives for Bengal and Behar on an average a village school for every 63 children of the school-going age, including boys and girls. Mr. Adam found no "indigenous girls' school", and deducting the number of girls from those of the school-going age, he reached the conclusion that there was "an indigenous elementary school for every 81 or 82 boys". The estimate of 1,00,000 such schools in Bengal and Behar was confirmed by the consideration of the number of villages in those provinces, which had been officially estimated at 1,50,748. The writer concedes that the figures he enumerates were only "distant approximations" to the real state of things. But he asserts that—

"..... It will still appear that the system of village schools is extensively prevalent; that the desire to give education to their male children must be deeply seated in the minds of parents even of the humblest classes; and that these are the institutions, closely interwoven as they are with the habits of the people and the customs of the country, through which primarily, although not exclusively, we may hope to improve the morals and intellect of the Native population."

Thus were the foundations of enlightenment as a buttress of imperial consolidation sought to be strengthened by spreading it amongst the widest commonalty. Mr. W. Adam came into touch with all sorts and conditions of men, in the rural parts of the province in course of his enquiry, and he could well gauge the innermost mind of the people in relation to the administration. He advised "wary treading" even in measures of uplift and sincere help; he put it down that "the utmost that can be said of native society in general, even in its most favourable aspect, is that there is no hostility, but in place of it a cold, dead, apathetic indifference which would lead the people to change masters to-morrow without a struggle or a sign". The conqueror's spirit, the pride of domination, on the one hand, and the fears and prejudices of native society on the other had between them combined to raise a barrier of suspicion. This barrier could be pulled down only by the Government initiating "comprehensive measures for the promotion and right direction of national education", education in consonance with national prepossessions, traditions and prejudices. This education would enlist the services of the young men of the higher classes who were being turned out of the colleges in ever-increasing numbers. Wisely handled, the extension of vernacular education would place the Government in friendly relations with every city, town and hamlet, with every head of a family, with every instructor of youth, and with the entire juvenile population gradually developing into the adult population of the country; it would constitute a chain the links of which would be found in every village and at every hearth. This, in brief, was the prospect which Mr. W. Adam called up before the Government in pressing for the acceptance of his proposals.

The apostles of enlightenment, of the reconstruction of life and thought of an ancient people in the moulds imported from Europe, had hoped that Western education would confirm the then political and social order, strengthen British rule and the leadership of the native aristocracy. This hope very soon proved vain and futile. The spirit of criticism

Curving Con-  
sequences of  
light

and revolt against traditional life and conduct which the new enlightenment had encouraged, soon learnt to spare no authority, sacred or profane. The socio-religious revolt and revolution presaged an order and quality of mind which would be less disposed to regard an executive order as a decree of Providence, and would be more conscious of positive rights secured by statutes and enforceable in law. Though this habit of mind might speak of these rights as inherent in British citizenship, the rights of men did not take long to crop up and assert their individuality and indefeasibility. It took three quarter of a century to complete this full cycle of evolution. As in other fields of activity so in helping to evolve a watchful public and political life in India, open and organised, Raja Ram Mohun Roy acted as the pioneer. Around him gathered men who fought for justice and equity in society and state, and organised themselves for the redress of the grievances of their people and the assertion of their rights as citizens—Dwarkanath Tagore, Romanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Tara Charan Chakravorty, succeeded by Ram Gopal Ghosh, Dakshminaranjan Mukherjee, Harish Chandra Mukherjee and Rev. K. M. Banerjee. Raja Ram Mohun Roy was a realist in politics; he recognized and acknowledged the need of "many years of British domination" in India. But he could imagine a time when it would serve the British empire better to have India "as a willing province, an ally of British empire or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy". He could think of such a possibility:

"Supposing that hundred years hence the Native character becomes elevated from the constant intercourse with Europeans and the acquirement of general and political knowledge as well as of modern arts and sciences, is it possible that they will not have the spirit as well as the inclination to resist effectually any unjust and oppressive measures serving to degrade them in the scale of society".

The men who followed the foot-steps of Raja Ram Mohun Roy in his endeavours and strivings for social and political reform and progress worked under the impulse of hope and faith that in process of time the rulers would redeem their promises to efface "all distinction between conqueror and conquered"; they laboured, encouraged by the teachings of their own interpretations of British history. And they could work and labour in all charity and equanimity of temper. For more than two generations they trod their self-chosen path of appealing to the good sense and the better nature of their rulers.

This dependence on the good-will of the rulers for the realization of their hopes of political reform and advance had for its corollary the attempt to invite and enlist the sympathy and support of individual British men and women in their cause, both in India and Britain. The name of Mr. J. Crawford needs mention in this connection, for he was entrusted by Ram Mohun Roy, in 1829, with petitions, signed by Hindus and Muslims, for presentation to both the Houses of Parliament against the Jury Act passed two years before in the British Parliament. This Act introduced "religious distinctions into the judicial system of the country". "Any Natives, either Hindu or Mahomedan, are rendered.....subject to judicial trial by Christians, either European or Native, while Christians, including Native converts, are

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exempted from the degradation of being tried by a Hindu or Mussalman juror, however high he may stand in the estimation of society"; the Act denied to both the Hindus and Moslems "the honour of a seat in the Grand Jury even in the trial of fellow Hindus or Mussalmans." Mr. Crawford seems to belong to that fraternity who roam over the world, succouring distress, and fighting injustice, thus justifying the faith of man in man. The ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, associated with the French Revolution, had released a liberality of spirit which desired and strove for equality of human relations all over the world, irrespective of colour or creed. The abolition of slavery in the British empire was owing to some such impulse. In their attitude towards the people of India many a British politician and administrator shared this humanitarianism. The Marquis of Hastings is generally known as a military governor-general; he broke the back of the Marhatta confederacy. He also could think of "a time not very remote" when England will "on sound principles of policy wish to relinquish the domination which she has gradually and unintentionally assumed over this country, and from which she cannot at present recede." This was in 1818. In 1824 Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, could look forward to a time when "it will probably be best for both countries that the British control over India should be gradually withdrawn." Lord William Bentinck, governor-general in the early thirties of the last century, was fully conscious of the drawbacks of British rule in this country. Appearing as a witness before a House of Commons Committee (1837) he declared :

"In many respects the Mahomedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; they intermixed and intermarried with the natives; they admitted them to all privileges; the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identified. Our policy, on the contrary, has been the reverse of this.....

About 1838, Dwarkanath Tagore organised an agitation against the resumption of *lakheraj* (rent free) lands, in which we find European names, Messrs. Dickens and Turton, leading lawyers. In the same year was started the "Landholders' Society"; Dwarkanath Tagore was President, Prasanna Kumar Tagore and W. C. Hurry, the then Editor of the "Englishman" were Secretaries. But one British name stands out at that period of Indo-British co-operation for the redress of Indian grievances and the advancement of the political status of the Indian people—that of George Thompson. In 1838 there was dire famine in the "Upper Provinces"; the news of the ravages of starvation and death reached Britain. And George Thompson heard India "a-calling". Through his exertions the British India Society was started in London in 1839 with Lord Brongham as President. Thompson's writings and speeches on behalf of the Indian people brought on his head the thunders of the "Edinburgh Review" and other Jingo periodicals. To meet these attacks and to make the cause of India more known to the British public, he started a monthly—the "British Indian Advocate". In 1842 he came to Calcutta on the invitation of "Prince" Dwarkanath to study personally on the spot the questions and problems that waited solution to make the life of the Indian people self-respecting, contented, and happy under the British Crown. An Indian admirer, the editor

of some of his Indian speeches, called him "the Father of Political Education in India". Well did he deserve the title. For, he taught "Young Bengal" the technique of political agitation, of the study and discussion of public questions. Under his inspiration was inaugurated the Bengal British India Society in 1843, the object of which was proposed to be "the collection and dissemination of information, relating to the actual condition of the people of India, and the Laws and Institutions and the Resources of the country, and to employ such other means of a peaceful and lawful character, as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, to extend the just rights, and advance the interest of all classes of our fellow subjects". Two European gentlemen, Messrs. Speed and Crow, are found among those who proposed or seconded the resolutions at the inaugural meeting. It was decided also that the new Society would co-operate with that under Lord Brougham for the promotion of Indian interests. The possibilities of this co-operation did not suit the taste or interests of a section of Europeans in India whose press-organ stigmatized the London Society as "admirably adapted as a receptacle for the resentments of Native Land-holders". The amalgamation of the Landholders' Society and the British India Society paved the way of the British India Association (1851).

Indo British co-operation in politics, however, was getting difficult. Young India, nurtured in the colleges, were being rendered unstable with the introduction of the fumes of the "New wine of Western Learning" into its head; it was learning to look at the dominant race straight in the face; it began to assert claims to equality with the ruling race in the scheme of the State-organization of the country. These claims put up the back of Anglo-India, and rendered it sensitive to the premonitory disturbances in the atmosphere in India. An occasion was offered by the Government for a burst up of racial arrogance. In 1849 they published four "Draft Acts", touching the rights and privileges of the European and Christian subjects of the Crown in India, distinct from those of the Natives of the land. They were;

- (1) An Act for abolishing exemption from the jurisdiction of the East India Company's courts, hitherto enjoyed by Europeans in India;
- (2) an Act declaring the law as to the privileges of Her Majesty's European subjects in India;
- (3) an Act for trial by Jury;
- (4) an Act for protection of judicial officers.

The European community raised a great hue and cry; there were gatherings of all the clans at which their "class privileges" were angrily asserted; Indian jurors and judges who might, under the proposed amendments, sit in judgment on European and Christian culprits, were, in anticipation, roundly denounced; and the character of the natives of the country was traduced, a group of Europeans in Behar declaring that under the proposed laws no one would "find security against accusation in the inoffensiveness of his own character in this country, where the immorality of the population is extreme and universal"; the Natives of the country were reminded anew that they were a subject race, and that it was not in the power of men "to make unequal equal". This agitation of the Europeans against the "Black

Acts" roused responsive angry feelings in the hearts of educated Indians; and Ram Gopal Ghosh as tribune of the people denounced the agitators as a "new breed of Brahmins" who refused to be made amenable or subject to the ordinary laws of the land. This denunciation was a symptom of the rising temper in the educated community in India.

The gulf that separated the Native inhabitants of India and the British community sojourning here for purposes of administration as also those who came as traders, merchants, planters, captains of industries, missionary proselytisers and educators, had been thinly covered up by good-will on the part of the latter and a sense of gratitude on that of the former. The education that the former had been receiving had created in them a bias in favour of the new rulers and all that they stood for as evangelists of modernism and progress. Liberalism was in the air in the West; it was wafted to the East. In religion and society the rulers, and the resident European community encouraged this liberalism as a solvent of the weaknesses and corruptions of Indian life. But they were not prepared to allow it to intrude into the fields of administration and politics. This policy of reticence finds its best expression in the words Sir Alfred Lyall who may be accepted as the representative of the better mind of the ruling authority. Said he in one of his articles since published in the book—"Asiatic Studies":

"We may hope that all reflecting and far-sighted natives of the class, which we are rapidly training up in large towns in political knowledge and social freedom, will perceive that England's prime function in India is at present this, to superintend the tranquil elevation of the whole moral and intellectual standard. Those who are interested in such a change in the ethics of their country, in broadening the realms of the known and the true, must see how ruinously premature it is to quarrel with the English Government upon details of administration, or even upon what are called constitutional questions".

But the mischief which started with the Anglo-Indian agitation in 1849, rending the thin cover from over the gulf between the two peoples, was not precipitated by any limited State policy against which the subject population had any wide-awake grievance. The British community in India by their arrogance and the language in which they expressed it raised this insignificant problem to a wider and higher plane—the plane of racial self-respect. The educated Indian community felt compelled by their new ideas of personal and racial honour, induced by the new enlightenment, to refuse to compromise on the matter. The administration might retreat in face of the intransigence of their nationals, as they did in 1849, as also eight years later on the eve of the "Sepoy Mutiny". In the latter year the Government attempted to carry out the same reform, and was met with the same clamour and opposition; the country was treated to the same exhibition of racial arrogance. A public meeting was held, and resolutions were passed defamatory of Indian character. A petition to the British Parliament was drawn up in which the following words found place:—

"Your petitioners boldly and confidently assert, that no class of Natives is fit to be entrusted with criminal powers over Europeans, being wholly disqualified for the due exercise of such powers, by antagonistic feelings, inveterate prejudices of caste,



utter want of independence of mind, and of freedom from improper influences of all kinds."

Thus and then was the foundation of estrangement between Indian and Briton laid in the middle of the last century. The "Sepoy Mutiny" with its brutalities and terrorisms worsened conditions. It was thought and hoped, however, that the outburst being an abnormal episode in a long-drawn political maladjustment, the tension of feeling generated thereby would have but a temporary tenure. We find Lord Lawrence as governor-general writing to his friends in Britain about this bitterness, his helplessness in face of it, and of his hopes of a better time. Irritation of feelings roused by frankly political considerations do not give rise to permanent bitterness. But the feeling that was stirred by the Government attempt at bringing European culprits to the judgment seat of Indian Magistrates and Judges had elsewhere its rise, as manifested by the doggerel when the first Indian was appointed a judge of the High Court at Calcutta:

"A sop to the Bengali,  
to English minds a wrench.  
Our rulers thought it right to raise,  
One native to the Bench".

This attitude of the British community in India the administrators found themselves unable to control or regulate. Both these factors imparted the first astonished shock of repulsion felt by the educated Indian against the order of things, educational and cultural, that had followed British rule in India. The disillusionment reached its climax nearly thirty years after at the time of Lord Ripon when what is known in history as the "Ilbert Bill" was before the Legislative Council. It was introduced by Sir Courtney Ilbert on the 2nd February, 1883. And the storm burst. Not clearing the atmosphere. But darkening the prospect of Indo-British amity for a long day. Men of the generations that have followed inherited the memories of those days, making things difficult, if not almost insoluble. What those memories were and what have they meant to educated Indians, we will let an Anglo-Indian writer to describe, before a narration of those excited events is attempted. Lord Ripon's Government failed to pass the Bill in its integrity. This failure was regarded by Indians as a "surrender", and by Anglo-Indians, official and non-official, as a "triumph". Soon after Lord Ripon left India, amidst the frigid civility of his countrymen. As a counter-blast the Indian community showered on him addresses, and other marks of exuberant friendliness. The unanimity of these demonstrations almost startled all, testifying to the emergence of an all-India feeling. A Calcutta paper wrote an article on the lesson of these demonstrations, entitled—"If it be real, what does it mean?" The *Pioneer* of Allahabad, the newspaper that reflected the mind of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, published an article from an anonymous correspondent, almost as a sort of a reply to the question asked in the Calcutta paper. In Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee's speeches, and in his autobiography—"A Nation in the Making"—the article has been ascribed to Sir Auckland Colvin, who as lieutenant-governor of

the United Provinces in 1887 helped to organize an opposition to the Indian National Congress headed by Sir Sayyad Ahmmad and Raja Shiv Prasad. The impression seems to be wrong. For, we find the article reprinted in the life of Sir Sayyad Ahmmad, written by Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, a Superintendent of Police in the province. Though occupying a not very high position in the official hierarchy, the writer appears to have held a high position in his society.

He traced the evolution of the awakening in Indian society as a "If it be real what result of British connection, and accepted its reality. does it mean"? While the Indian mind had moved responsive to the new forces,.....

".....the English mind in India has been tempted to stand still, arrested by the contemplation of the fruits of its own efforts in former times, and by the symmetry of the shrine, the pride of its creation, in which it lingers to offer incense to its past successful labours, the Indian mind has been marching on, eager and anxious, to expand its own sphere of action, and to do what it, for its own part, has to do..... it has succeeded at length in waking to the consciousness of its own powers and the assurance of its own success. The breath has come into the bones, and they are about to live and stand up upon their feet, an exceeding great army....."

But the full awakening had yet to come, waiting on events and the realisation of their full significance, waiting for the destined impetus.

".....while the native mind is still in this mood, half day-dawn and half chaos, has occurred the catastrophe of March, 1883. The sudden declaration of the English in India that they would recognise in the Indian nothing but simply a subject race, has brought the issue clearly and without possibility of self-deception before all classes and races in the country. The dry bones of the children of activity, their opponents have urged, shall not live, nor again stand up upon their feet. There shall be subordination; there shall not be citizenship. Nevertheless the prophet has said that the bones shall live; that the spirit of their Maker shall be in them; that He would place them in their own land; and that then they should know that He has spoken it and performed it."

The miracle of the awakening had been implicit in the developments of the fifty years previous to Lord Ripon; for, to use the words of Sir William Hunter, "the Queen's Government had deliberately accepted the risks of a united India".

"The incident of the Criminal Procedure Bill may no doubt have brought about abruptly, brutally, and of force, what would otherwise, in the ordinary course of events, have arrived in the consummation of time. But the time, in truth, was ripe; the hour of the new birth was a narrow question. Whether it were by Ripon or another, the charm which had held the sleeper bound was to be broken, and the time for breaking it was at hand....."

The days of the old system that "made for mere repression" were numbered. The rank and file of the European community in India were not prepared to acknowledge the inevitability of the process. And in trying to prolong the influence of the charm that held India bound, they hastened "the time for breaking it". How they did this by their ignorance and violence, by their unconsciousness to the march of human progress, may here be narrated. Such a recital is necessary to understand the evolution of political thought and life in India which has been slowly revealing to the world these fifty years and more.

Genesis of the  
"libert"  
proposals

## THE INDIAN ANNUAL REGISTER

The Bill for an amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code proposed "to confine the office of justice of the peace, and with it the power of trying European British subjects, to those persons, whether European or native, who have received a training that may be presumed to guarantee the possession of the qualities required for the proper disposal of such cases.....all district and sessions judges should be vested with the powers in question in virtue of their office, and by a definite provision in the law;.....to empower the Local Governments, outside the Presidency towns, to confer these upon those members (a) of the covenanted Civil Service, (b) of the Native Civil Service constituted under the statutory Rules, and (c) of the non-Regulation Commissions, who were already exercising first class magisterial powers, and, in their opinion, fit to be entrusted with these further powers". In a letter to Lord Hartington (Secretary of State for India) (Sept. 8, 1882), Lord Ripon explained the genesis of these proposals.

"The Native members of the Civil Service.....both those who have got in by competition at home, and those who are being admitted every year out here under the system established in Lytton's time - will ere long be rising to positions in which, although they are in all other respects on an equal footing with their English colleagues, they will, under the provisions of the existing law, be precluded from trying Europeans in the Mofussil. In the Presidency towns, by a strange anomaly, natives are allowed to exercise over Europeans jurisdiction..... It is clear that an invidious distinction of this kind between members of the same service cannot be maintained. When we were passing the Bill for amending the Criminal Procedure Code..... last winter, one of the leading members of the Council, Maharajah Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore, was anxious to bring the subject forward and move amendments in the Bill with a view to giving Native Civil Servants jurisdiction over Europeans..... I pointed out that it would be impossible for the Government to make so important a change ..... at such short notice..... very shortly afterwards Sir Ashley Eden (Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal) sent us a letter saying that in his opinion the existing law on the subject could not be maintained, and explained the manner in which he thought it should be altered. We, therefore, sent a circular letter to the Local Governments generally,..... and they have, with the insignificant exception of Coorg, decided in favour of the alteration to the present law".

Supported by these approvals of the local Governments, Sir Courtney Ilbert, the Law Member, proceeded with the draft, and presented. New Method of the Bill to the Council on the 2nd February, 1883.

### Agitation

What followed may well be described in the words of Lucien Wolf, Lord Ripon's biographer :

"Within a few weeks the whole of the British community in the Peninsula was swept by a tornado of violent denunciation of the Bill. A monster indignation meeting took place in the Calcutta Town Hall, at which the speeches were of an intemperance beyond all limits of decency. Similar meetings were held all over the Presidency, and the Anglo-Indian press, notably the *Englishman*—became utterly hysterical. An 'Anglo-Indian and European Defence Association' was formed..... Among other features of their campaign, the volunteers were openly incited to resign in a mass, and certain persons even 'sounded opinions in the canteens' ..... in other words attempted to seduce the Army. The non-official community boycotted Ripon's levees, and there was a proposal to boycott the Government loan. On his return to Calcutta in the winter, the Viceroy was openly insulted in the streets by planters brought down from the Mofussil for the occasion..... The wife of the Chief Justice showed her appreciation of the responsibility attaching to her husband's official position by getting up a 'Ladies' Petition' against the Bill. Ripon gives a quotation from the letters of a certain Britannica, (sic!) who wrote to the *Englishman* regularly on the subject : 'The only people who have any right to India are the British : the so-called (sic!) Indians have no right whatever'. The behavior of the natives in face of this

campaign was, on the whole, surprisingly moderate, though of course the extreme newspapers on their side replied in kind to the European attacks".

A conspiracy was set on foot to get hold of Lord Ripon, put him on board a steamer and send him to Britain via the Cape of Good Hope. Mr. Rivers Thompson, Lieutenant-governor of the Agitation Bengal, was cognisant of the fact, says Buckland in his book—"Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors."

Lord Ripon explained the inner history of the agitation as follows in a private letter :

"The bar have been very sore about the reduction of the Judges' pay and Mitter's (Ramesh Chandra) appointment as Acting Chief Justice, and were only too glad of an opportunity to do the Government an injury, if they could ; and the idea of an opposition to the Bill was started in the Bar Library by some of the English barristers. Communications were entered into with the *Englishman* office, and circulars in the shape of letters were sent to the Planters and settlers up-country suggesting their opposition to the Bill, and I fancy, putting a strong fanciful case before them"

How fanciful these could be was shown by a letter of Meredith Townsend, author of "Asia and Europe", to a friend saying :

"Would you like to live in a country where at any moment your wife would be sentenced on a false charge of slapping an Ayah to three days imprisonment, the Magistrate being a copper-coloured Pagan, who probably worships the *Linga*....."

Wilfrid Blunt in his book—"India under Ripon"—has another explanation of the agitation.

"Lord Ripon in the spring of 1883, when after two years of unwearied labour in the attempt to gain over the Anglo-Indian officials to some practical measure in accordance with the Queen's Proclamation, he decided to give battle on what is called as the Ilbert Bill of that year, knew himself already to be a beaten man ; he felt that he was championing a lost cause".

The lesson of the Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill was unmistakable. It was hinted at in Lieutenant-Colonel Graham's

The Lesson of the Agitation article in the *Pioneer*, extracts from which have been quoted above. A British historian, Prof. Dodwell, puts it tersely : "The passionate claim of the European to predominance was to be answered by the passionate claim of the Indian to equality". The London *Punch* had a cartoon "representing Ripon driving an elephant (India), while a party of Anglo-Indians threatened him and molested him from the howdah". The cartoon had the characterization,

"The Anglo-Indian Mutiny..... a bad example for the elephant".

The disharmony between the two peoples which the Ilbert Bill agitation had laid bare was the final stage of a development that had begun years earlier. It partook something of the character of the evolution of a natural process, slowly revealing itself in successive stages and stratifications.

The world have been taught to believe that the East was a static body which bowed low before the blast of European aggression, political, religious and cultural, not in fear or from a sense of helplessness, but "in patient deep disdain"; and that it "plunged in thought again", letting the legion thunder past. It is difficult to say whether this picture was meant, or should be accepted, as a commendation or a condemnation, and how far it is true. If it carried the impression that the East "plunged in thought again" unconscious of the

threat that the new-comer from the West held to the integrity of its life, it would not be true. In one sense the portrait may be accepted as true, in the sense that the East plunged into thought to plumb the depths of the soul of her culture and to draw up from it the waters of life with a view to irrigate and fertilize the varied fields of her social life. In no other sense was it true to facts or to the experiences of the time we have been dealing with.

True it is that in India the generations that slowly and painfully learnt to accommodate themselves to the order of things introduced by the British rulers had succumbed in complete political helplessness. With these defences going down, they seemed to lie helpless face to face with a triumphant and aggressive civilization and culture. The ruling authorities very soon convinced themselves that this country not only needed their political control, but also that the acceptance of the higher social ethics represented by them was the only lever which could rescue the subject populations from their degradation. Alexander Duff may be taken as a representative of this type of mind. "He visualized the utter destruction of Indian culture and social institutions. In his suggestive figure, he was laying a mine which would one day rend Hinduism from its foundations". On the side of administration, Dalhousie was "the tool and fashioner" of "the new spirit of eager, masterful, inventive Anglicism" which hoped to force its ways through "the last barriers of Eastern prejudice, sluggishness and self-content". An American author of a book on the influence of Christian missions on the evolution of Indian nationalism, speaking of Duff's hopes and their failure, says that "the years have revealed Hinduism as a far more organic structure than he (Duff) recognized it to be". Years of self-organisation have enabled Indian culture and social life to win this recognition of its strength and vitality. The history of the years we have been dealing with is the history of a social organization that had become alive to the dangers that threatened the norms and forms of its life, and that consciously adopted measures for their safety.

India in the milleniums of her life-history have met with many a stranger who came to her as a scourge and remained to strengthen her life by the assimilation of their virility into the life and conduct of this country. Persians, Greeks, Sakas, Huns came as conquerors and are to-day undistinguishable as separate entities, consciously asserting a separate individuality of their own. The Moslem came professing a faith different from that of the subject Hindu population. There were iconoclastic outbursts and attempts at suppression of Hindn faith and practices. But in course of time, as they came to settle down into peaceful social life and learnt to adapt themselves to the physical and mental atmosphere of the country as neighbours of an unbelieving "majority" community, a synthesis of cultures and interests was worked out. In the general economic life of the country Hindu and Moslem did not come into conflict. Economic organisation and arrangements, based on "easy-going, self-sufficing agriculture and handicrafts", came in easily and naturally to both the rulers and the ruled. Race or religion ceased to be considered or recognised as a "bar sinister" to the legitimate ambition of partnership in the enjoyment or exercise of the powers

Distinguishing  
characteristic of  
British Rule

of the State. But with the advent of British rule "a system of specialised machinery and communication" was introduced into the country forcing out of existence or reducing to a pale imitation of life, India's multifarious industries. Ignorance of India's basic principle of proprietorship of the soil led the new rulers to adopt a land policy which disrupted social life. In certain tracts of the country, in Bombay and Madras, the Government decided to deal with every individual cultivator as regards the payment of revenue, the tendency of which was "to break up the village community". In other parts, in Bengal, Behar, Orissa and the U. P. they converted "farmers" or collectors of revenue into proprietors of land, with a similar result. As stated by Sir Thomas Maine, in a state of society where the rights of individual members are determined by customs, more or less vague, by status and not by contract, the question as to whom the Government makes responsible for the payment of its dues, practically determines what type of society it shall assume. The disruption of village communities had begun in the anarchy that intervened between the weaknesses and corruptions of Hindu and Moslem rule and the secure establishment of British rule. By their land-policy the new rulers only hastened their destruction.

In the thirties of the last century the leaders of the Indian communities were confronted with this disruption, rather they awoke to the full realization of the danger that lurked behind and before them. They found the old idols fallen from the tripods; and new idols presented by the ruling race for adoption and worship. From an article by Girish Chandra Ghosh, the founder and first editor of the *Bengalee*, one can get an idea of the mind of that age.

Scepticism of  
"Young India"

"They have learned to disbelieve the old religion, it is true, but they are not ignorant of the tenets of the Christian faith but in many instances have studied the subject deeply—though having escaped from the trammels of one class of prejudices (at least in idea) they are not willing to be entangled in the snares of any other class."

This scepticism had reference not only to the religious life but also to other departments of society. The old social polity had failed to protect and ensure an independent, coherent and equitable life in the country, and there were very few to do it sincere reverence. Faced by attacks from without and defection from within, Indian society felt the need, moved by the impulse of self-preservation, of a re-examination and re-interpretation of life in the light of universal experience and in response to the demands of modern life. Reform of social life became thus urgent, and there was great, keen, and varied controversies with regard to the methods of carrying it out. The methods discussed, and adopted by men, temperamentally or intellectually differing from one another, were:

Composite  
character of  
Reforms

(I) The traditional method, i. e. which sought to carry out reforms by showing that they are not innovations at all, but they faithfully carry out the spirit and even the letter of ancient scriptures which are the repositories of the experiences of men in different countries;

(II) The legislative method, i. e. which sought to carry out reforms with the help of decrees from the authority of the State;

(III) The conscience method, i. e. which sought to carry out reforms by appealing to the sense of right and wrong, native to every human being, which, debased or

clouded by custom, manages to assert its authority in crises of individual and social life ;

(iv) Rebellion method, i. e., which sought to carry out reforms by separating from conservative orthodox people and forming a new camp, breaking with the historic continuity of social life.

In none of the apostles of the new life in India, beginning with Raja Ram Mohun Roy and continued by Mahatma Gandhi, can one find any of them adopting one single method. They combined one or the other or one after another as the necessities of the case demanded. Ram Mohun Roy in eastern India, and Dadoba Pandurang in Western India

**Hindu  
Reformers**

anticipated and paved the way of almost all the social reforms that are still with us. The latter founded in 1840 the *Paramhansa Mandali*—Divine Society—with the following objects : abolition of caste ; re-introduction of the custom of widow re-marriage ; and the renunciation of idolatry. Particular items of social reform, such as widow-re-marriage, enlisted the services of eminent scholars—Vidyasagar (Iswar Chandra) in Bengal, Vishnu-Sastri Pandit in Bombay, Kandukuri Veerasalingam Pantalu in the Andhra-Desha, Behramji Mehta Malabari and Kursundas Mulji in Guzerat, and Dayaram Gidumal in Sindh. Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, in the maturity of his youth, received from Virajananda the mission of his life, bound by an oath which demanded that he "would carry increasing war against the dogma and idolatry of the Puranic faith, and establish education in accordance with the ancient Brahmanic traditions." The Prarthana Samaj in Bombay (1867) inaugurated "amid the wave of religious enthusiasm that marked the second visit to Bombay of.....Keshab Chandra Sen," was the expression of the type of practical intellectuality for which Maharashtra is famous. Mahadev Gobind Ranade was the leading spirit of this development seeking to apply and realize "the love of God in the service of men."

Among Indian Moslems Sir Sayyad Ahmmad was the pioneer in the British period of rationalistic thought ; his "Commentaries on the Bible" showed the way in which he wanted his community to move. Wilfrid Blunt calls him a "Deist," and reports that by his community he was regarded as nothing better than a "nature worshipper." His

**Moslem  
Reformers**

biographer says that he saw

"the weakness that had crept over the Mohamedans through their estrangement from the thoughts and aspirations of the 19th. century, and he proposed to himself the great task of making Mohamedans change, not their dogmas, but their policy, so that independence and political liberation should no longer be accounted as symptoms of heterodoxy."

For his troubles in this behalf he was denounced as a "lieutenant of the Evil One." When he took the lead in founding the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (1875) the Ulemas of Mecca whose *futuwa* had been invited by opponents of the scheme issued the curse—"May God destroy it and its founder" ; one of them declaring that "Shere Ali ( the murderer of Lord Mayo ).....could have ensured Paradise for himself by killing Sayyad Ahmmad" !

The results of Sir Sayyad Ahmmad's work prove that he represented "the future." Nawab Abdul Lateef and his generation of English

educated Moslems had started on their mission of reform years before Sir Sayyad, when they tried to "break down prejudices and exclusiveness, and to interest their community in present-day politics and modern thought learning." But they lacked the vision of the Aligarh reformer, and an English admirer of theirs lamented that they would go down before the school represented by Sayyad Amcer Ali. The rational and liberal interpretation of Islamic life and culture initiated in India by Sir Sayyad Ahmad was carried on by the school of modern educated Moslems of whom the Bengali Shia Moslem, Sayyad Amcer Ali, was the most prominent member. His writings on Moslem history and kindred subjects first opened the eyes of his community to the glories of their heritage, confirmed them in their self-repeat, and played the pioneer part of the awakening of Moslems in India. He was a child of the 19th. century, and his historical work had a deep significance for his community, for it nursed and encouraged that spirit of separatism with which Indian statesmanship finds itself wrestling even to-day. This process is a stage in self-realization, whether individual or social. The ferment of new thought that had begun to stir life in India has penetrated the dour conservatism of Indian Moslems, and custodians of traditional culture are found to-day trying to cut a way through the mazes of hair-splitting subtleties. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad in his *Tarzaman-i-Koran* attempts a liberal interpretation of Islam which will bring it into line with the other theologies of the world. And the centres of traditional learning of Islam in India such as those at Nadva, and Deobund in the U. P. are face to face with the same problem of how to reconcile the spirit of their creed and its injunctions with the thoughts and needs of the modern world. Hindu society had been challenged fifty years earlier by similar problems, more intricate in their nature, because Hinduism and its social polity are weighted down with a longer tradition and a more complex hierarchy of relations; and that society has been moving forward consciously in advance, step by step, into new difficulties, new experiences, new accommodations to new environments. Moslem society in India cannot escape the travails of this experience, whereby only can it throw out the loads of traditional life that clog its movements.

In discussing the first introduction of British Education into India we pointed to the political motives of its initiation. In earlier ages in all countries conquerors adopted the rougher and readier methods of physical coercion to secure and retain the allegiance of their subjects. In modern times the subtler method of "education in citizenship" is thought to be the better method of the two. All governments consciously direct and utilize their powers towards this objective, because newer ideas of state-craft have with vividness brought to view the "importance of education and its organisation in relation to political and constitutional conditions and potentialities of progress", to quote the terms of reference to the Simon Commission. British rulers in India had realized the importance of this issue a hundred years back. Christian missionaries in India had their own ambitions to realize which in the ultimate analysis was found to be not incompatible with the purposes and inclinations of the "Chris-

Protective  
measures through  
Education



tian Power" in the country. It was Christian missionary education as represented by Duff in Bengal, Wilson in Bombay, Anderson in Madras, Noble in the Andhra Desa, that first came into clash with the feelings and interests of the Indian community. That generation of Christian missionaries were triumphantly declaring their intentions and proclaiming the coming of the day of their victory. It was Hindu Society that first woke up to the dangers of these activities. It saw that the education that had received the imprimatur of the ruling authority could not be rejected without detriment to material interests, and to that extent it was prepared to welcome it, tolerate and promote it. But education under Christian control, with conscious and deliberate Christian bias instilled into the students, was another and a different proposition. Realizing this, it decided to give battle to the foreign education, not by rejecting it, but by getting control over it and neutralising its anti-Indian bias. This was the psychology of wide-spread educational activities that started on the initiative of Hindu Society even as early as the twenties and thirties of the last century. In Bengal, in Bombay, in Maharashtra, in Madras, in the Andhra Desa, in the Punjab, educational institutions were started by Hindus, individually and collectively, under their own control, teaching the official curricula, but shorn of any bias that offended the customs and usages of the country. The biographies of Bengalee celebrities of whom Bhudev Chandra Mukherjee was the best constructive type record these activities. In Bombay we find Gokuldas Tejpal maintaining a string of schools and a Sanskrit College; the Bombay Students' Literary and Scientific Society maintaining a number of Hindu Girls' Schools and a Hindu Boys' School. In Maharashtra the fullest flowering of these efforts was the Deccan Education Society (1881), the first members of which were Vishnu Sastri Chiplunkar, Balwant Gangadhar Tilak, Gopalrao Agarkar and Madhorao Namjoshi and their friends. We read in their biographies that these youngmen were dissatisfied as early as 1875, hardly twenty years after the establishment of British universities in the country, with the system of alien values introduced through education. They wanted and sought to modify them by making education racy of the soil, making it cheap in consonance with the economic condition of the country. In Madras the Triplicane High English School was preceded by the Pachhyappa's Foundation, the major part of whose income was devoted to education, as was that founded by the great Moslem philanthropist, Haji Mohammad Moshin, in Bengal. In the Andhra Desa the Pithapuram Raja's College (Coconada) and the Vizianagram Raja's College have developed from very small beginnings started in the middle of the last century. The Hindu High School at Masulipatam started on the initiative of two Deputy Magistrates who begged from door to door for boys as well as for funds, and the Theistic High School at Rajahmundry owed their inauguration to the same impulse. In Northern India, in the Punjab specially, the colleges and the *Gurukulas* started under the auspices of the Arya Samaj in fulfilment of the mission of its founder, are a triumphant culmination of the same tradition. The Moslem community in India had at this period retired into its shell. But by 1875 it decided to come out of it and play its legitimate part in the ordering of the destiny of the country, the symbol of which was the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College.

As a product of educational activities, carried on by foreign or native agency, there grew up a new sense of self-respect in the Indian community. The researches of Sir William Jones, Colebrooke, Max Muller, Weber and others opened before India the glories of the past which could be reproduced in the future. The Theosophical Society contributed its share in the awakening of this self-respect. All these influences worked in the educated Indian and helped him to throw off the apologetic attitude he had been cultivating with regard to his social institutions and religious life; they made the educated Indian "less submissive in tone and language than formerly, more erect in mental and moral stature in the presence of Europeans", to quote the words of Sir Temple. Raj Narayan Basu, the grand-father of Sri Aurobinda, in his Bengali autobiography, has recorded for us the history of this evolution in Indian mind. Speaking of one of the apostles of the Brahmo Samaj, Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore's studied avoidance of Europeans, he says:

"Devendra Babu is by nature averse to intimate relation with Europeans, because there existed a difference of opinion between him and Europeans in relation to matters pertaining to India. It is possible to acquire name and fame in India and Britain if one said ditto to British opinion; but Devendra Babu is not at all anxious to secure this approbation. Principal Lobb of the Krishnagore College once wrote to a newspaper—"The proud old man does not condescend to accept the praise of Europeans".

This new self-respect in the educated Indian found its echo in what has been called the "return movement" in Indian society in the British period. Some call it "a revival", others characterise it "a reaction". Reaction or revival, the educated Indian, the product of English education, was the first to stand up on behalf of his creed and his customs. Emboldened by his example, the custodians of orthodoxy came forward to lead the counter-attack on alien ways of life and thought. Dayananda Saraswati, Sasadhar Tarkachurnamani and Sri Krishnaprasanna Sen in Bengal, and Vishnuboa Brahmachari in Bombay represent this phase of life. The Indian community had had placed in their hands proofs of the glories of their past; more intimate knowledge of European life enabled them to start comparison between the two; a comparative study showed them that they had no reason to be apologetic or shamefaced when confronted with European values of life. The last quarter of the 19th. century shows us this development in its aggressiveness.

This outline of the beginnings of resurgent self-respect and self-assertion in India would be incomplete if the awakening among Indian Moslems were not given its proper place in it. It is a generally-accepted view that Sir Sayyad Ahmad was the inaugurator of the "new departure" in the life of his community. This view circumscribes the back-ground, and is not true to facts.

The awakening among Indian Moslems is not due to British inspiration and administration alone; it was part of the awakening that had its rise in Arabia, associated with the name of the founder of the Wahhabi movement, Mohommed Ibn Abd-el Wahhab, who lived and propagated his ideas of reform and reconstruction in the middle of the 18th. century A. D. A return to early Islam in its primitive purity and sim-

Revival  
National Self-  
respect

Moslem  
Awakening

licity, and a reform of the abuses that had crept into, and the deviations from, the original faith and conduct—abuses and deviations that had laid Islam low in the comity of faiths and cultures—this was the objective of Abd-el Wahhab. A stern Puritanism characterized the reformer and his followers. All luxury in habitation, dress, and daily life was proscribed; all decorations were removed from mosques; minarets, a Turkish innovation, and the rosary, adopted from Buddhism, were abolished." A Jewish writer assessing the ideal of the movement, initiated by Abd-el Wahhab, says:—

"The primitive moral purity and simplicity of the desert religion was to be restored and the influence of city civilisation on the development of Islam was to be eradicated. In this respect the Wahhabi movement resembles certain tendencies in ancient Jewish religious history which centred in the sect of Rechabites and the circles influenced by the early prophets.....at the same time this early prophetic movement involved a national protest against alien ways."

Amongst the most prominent of the followers of Abd-el Wahhab was Sheik Mohammed Ibn Saud of Deraya in the territory of Nejd in central Arabia, the ancestor of the present King of the Hedjaz. He and his son succeeded in bringing all the central Arabian tribes under unified political control and came to be regarded as the spear-head of the new

dispensation. By 1801 A. D., the grandson of Mohammed Ibn Saud felt himself strong enough to go forth in his career of aggression against those Arabs who had lapsed into heathen superstition and the worship of saints. The holy cities of Islam were regarded with intense hatred, for there had taken root all manner of abuses and abominations. Kerbala, the sacred city of the Shias in Mesopotamia, felt their first fury; the inhabitants were killed, the holy sepulchre destroyed, treasures collected in course of centuries plundered, and all sacred relics dishonoured. The next year (1802) Mecca was captured, the tombs of saints and objects of worship destroyed. Two years later Medina fell; the monument erected over the Prophet's grave was destroyed; and the hoarded treasures carried away. These atrocities called forth reprisals at the hand of the Turkish Government who cruelly suppressed the reformers' zeal and activity. They were wise in their apprehensions and persecutions. For the Wahhabi movement proved itself to be the precursor of Nationalism in Arabia, disrupting the Turkish Empire, and in other Moslem countries which were threatened by European Imperialism or were under it.

This intensification of religious feeling and political sentiments soon stepped over the boundaries of Arabia, and was imported into India by the numerous Indian Moslem pilgrims to Mecca. No records are available to trace the development of Wahhabism at this period. One Indian Moslem name, however, emerges out of the obscurity of these tangled happenings, that of Haji Shariyat Ullah, a native of Faridpur (Bengal). His followers are known to this day as "Feraiz" whose differences with other Sunni Moslems in our rural tracts have come to be attenuated with the passage of time. Shariyat Ullah's teachings prepared the minds of Moslems in India to receive and accept the tenets of Abd-el Wahhab. The man who encompassed this was Sayyad Ahmmad of Rae Bareilly in the United Provinces. In his early life he entered the services of Amir Khan Pindari, the found-

er of the Nawab family of Tonk. A little before 1817, when Amir Khan's hands were dispersed, Sayyad Ahmmad came to Delhi and became a disciple of Shah Abd-ul Aziz, the most learned Moslem theologian of the time, whose name and fame had spread beyond Hindusthan, and had earned for him the title which translated meant "Sun of India" from the Arab divines. Considering the time in which he lived, and the wreckage of Moslem power and prestige amidst which he moved, he seems to have been a realist, ready to compromise with the alien governing authority in the country, and the new order of things they had introduced here. A writer in an English-edited Indian monthly writing of him, says: "He recognized the propriety of learning English and taking service" with and under the British. This can be regarded as the first intimation of the Moslem acceptance of the regime started under British auspices in this country.

To return to Sayyad Ahmmad. After a discipleship of a few years, he started, on his own account. He claimed that he had been vouchsafed divine revelation in a dream "to take up the position of a *murshid*, and enrol disciples". When he developed a revised version of Wahhabism his former religious guide, Shah Abd-ul Aziz, repudiated him, as also his own nephew Mohammed Ismail and son-in-law Abdul Hai, who had become Sayyad Ahmmad's disciples. The adherence of these two learned divines sent up Sayyad Ahmmad's prestige in his community. In 1820 he asked his followers to take up the organization of a *jihād* against the Sikhs who were rulers and masters of the Punjab up to Peshawar. He started on a tour throughout northern India to propagate his ideas on religion and politics, secure forces and resources for the proposed war against the Sikhs. He came down to Calcutta (1821) where he was acclaimed by the Moslems as a deliverer. It is recorded that the Moslem population "of Baraset flocked to him in numbers". Among these was Titu Mir who in 1831 organized an *emutet* against the ruling authority. This attempt has become a by-word of blind, ignorant and ineffective fanaticism.

In 1822 Sayyad Ahmmad went on pilgrimage to Mecca wherefrom he returned the next year with a new halo of sanctity and authority. He passed through Bombay, enlisting disciples. He was a honoured guest at Tonk where his old commander's son and heir to the throne became his disciple. At Khairpur in Sindh, yet an independent country, he gained the ears of Moslem rulers and their subjects. From 1836 to 1831 he kept working at his project of a holy war against the Sikhs; but the best he could organize was desultory skirmishes, unproductive of any tangible advantage. In May, 1831, he and his followers were surprised and routed by the Sikhs at Balakot where Sayyad Ahmmad and Mohammed Ismail fell in the action.

This in brief was the life-history of Sayyad Ahmmad, the positive achievement of which was next to nothing. But in the realm of the spirit, in the widening of ideas, the movement initiated by him breathed "new life into the torpid existence of Indian Mohammedans." Its followers preached a return to the purity of Islam of the days of their Prophet, as a preliminary to the renewal of its life of spiritual glory and secular empire. It is said that soon after his return from Mecca,

Sayyad Ahmmad called a conference of his *caliphs* (lieutenants or agents) at Patna, and "parcelled out" India among them. Religious awakening led to a revival of the ideas of political hegemony from which the Moslems had been displaced only three-quarters of a century back. Sayyad Ahmmad's principal followers toured the country rousing these hopes in the heart of the community. Records of certain of these are available. Keramat Ali of Jaunpur travelled through Chittagong, Noakhali, Dacca, Mymensingh, Faridpur and Barisal; Inayat Ali of Patna through central Bengal, Pabna, Rajshahi, Maldah and Bogra; his elder brother Vilayat Ali's mission lay chiefly among the people of central India, Hyderabad (Deccan) and Bombay. It is recorded that in the Deccan "the people were stirred up to such a pitch of religious enthusiasm that even women were found to be selling their jewelleryes and devoting the proceeds to the support of the movement." The special attention that was devoted to the Bengali Moslems did not at first reap a harvest of men and money. But in course of time the movement became, we are told, "a Bengali-Mahomedan revival", due to the "intellectual superiority" of Bengali Moslems. The death or disappearance of Sayyad Ahmmad did not damp the fervour and enthusiasm of his followers, the most active among whom were Vilayat Ali and Inayat Ali of Patna. For, two decades after, when the Punjab had ceased to be a Sikh Kingdom, and had come to form a part of British India, the two brothers are found organizing an attack on India from their retreat in the hills beyond the Indus at a certain place called Sittana, and getting recruits and monetary contributions from Bengal and Behar. One of their disciples, Zain-ul Abdin of Hyderabad (Deccan) was a successful Wahhabi missionary, the number of his disciples even in Dacca and Sylhet testified to the religious and inchoate political appeal of Sayyad Ahmmad's version of Wahhabism.

The doctrinal differences that separate Indian Wahhabis from the main bodies of the Sunni Moslems in India, and agitate Moslems, even those living in our rural tracts, are not of importance to the other communities in India, or to the ruling power in the country. Even fanaticism learns after a while to make concession to the needs and demands of ordinary human relationships which are not equal to the strain of continuous ecstasies or exaltations of thought and activity. Wahhabism and its by-products have not escaped this experience. Hans Kohn in his "History of Nationalism in the East" traces the streak of liberalism that has evolved out of the fanatically inspired beginning. Says he :—

"On the other hand, reforming zeal aimed at a revival of the basic ethical code of Islam in a new liberal and humanistic form, not shunning the influence of other religions. These aspirations found expression principally in Babism (Persian in origin) and the Ahmadiya movement".

In the controversies among different sectaries of Islam, precipitated by the Wahhabis, there is one theory in which both the government and the other communities are vitally interested—the theory which divided the world into *Dar-ul-Islam*, the "country of safety" comprising all Moslem Kingdoms, and *Dar-ul-harb*, the "country of enmity" including all non-believing nations. According to the doc-

trices of the Hanafi sect, three conditions condemn a country to be regarded as *Dar-ul-harb* :

- (i) The public exercise of infidel authority, and the non-exercise of Moslem authority within it ;
- (ii) Annexation to the *Dar-ul-harb* without the interposition of any Moslem city or community ;
- (iii) The non-existence in it of a true believer.

The second and the third conditions do not apply to India, for it touches countries under Moslem domination, and the Moslem population of India count one-fifth of the total population.

Was India  
Dar-ul-Islam?

The first condition condemns India to a "country of enmity" if it be rigidly interpreted ; for the ruling authority in India is in "infidel" hands, non-Moslem. There is a lack of unanimity among Moslem jurists in their attitude to India. And the prospect of a democratic responsible self-government based on majority vote or voice cannot be welcome to the upholders of this theory, for, so far as human calculations go, the ruling authority will still be non-Moslem. Here is the source and root of the apparently insoluble problems of majority and minority representation, separate electorates, Moslem provinces, reservation and weightage. India does not satisfy conditions of orthodox statehood beloved of Hanafi doctrinaires. It is true that a section of Moslem jurists were or are prepared to waive objections to India being considered as *Dar-ul-Islam* considering the immense size of the Moslem population of the country. But the Hanafi theorists, under the influence of Wahhabism, as preached by Mohammed Ismail, one of the first and foremost of the disciples of Sayyad Ahmad, held that India cannot be regarded as *Dar-ul-Islam* as and when it is under "infidel authority". They called the testimony of Jewish history to the support of the condition of Indian Moslems under the British comparing it to that "of the Israelites in Egypt", hoping and praying for a second Moses who would lead them out of servitude and destitution to freedom and plenitude. Under the influence of this belief the followers of Sayyad Ahmad levied war against the British Government in India. That the general body of the Indian Moslem *intelligentsia* do not hold or stand by the strict interpretation of the Hanafi-cum-Wahhabi theory of state is all too apparent. But while conscious reason rejects as absurd many a theory or doctrine, the unconscious soul of nations or societies hugs them to heart. Therefore it is that Indian Moslems are torn by divided loyalties, one to their country and the other to their creed. This conflict stands in the way of their thought-leaders giving a right lead to their community ; it has clouded their counsels and encouraged them to cultivate a conceit of a separate and inviolate entity. How far this could go was expressed by Maulavi Kootb-ud-din, a successor of Shah Abdul Aziz, in his book *Tama Tufasar* published at Delhi in 1867. The following quotation is pertinent to the point under discussion :—

"The prophet said, 'I am displeased with every one of those Mussalmans who live among *Mushriks*' (a term applied to Christians in India). The companions of the prophet asked him.....'O Messenger of God, why are you displeased ? Then the prophet replied, 'Because it is essential to faith, that *Mushriks* and *Mussulmans* should

not be able to see each others' fires, i. e. it is necessary for a Muhammedan to keep himself at such a distance and so far aloof from a *Kafir*, that they may not be able to see each others' fire. Living amongst them is out of the question, for it produces weakness in Islam. This weakness is caused by looking at their custom".

Theodore Morison was Principal of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh during the last years of the last century. In his book—"Imperial Rule in India"—published in 1899 he opined that the Mohammedans did so little regard "India as their own country" that their great poet Altaf Hossain Hali, one of the minstrels of Moslem Renaissance in India, "compared his people to guests who had overstayed their welcome and lamented that they had left their native homes for India". And he quotes the following stanzas from Hali's poem—*Shikwah Hind*, to confirm his contention:

"Morning and evening our eyes now behold that which we thought would be the end of thy gracious acceptance."

"Quickly hast thou broken all thy promises and pledges; O India! we were told a-right that thou wast faithless."

"From every side we hear thee say that the guest is unwelcome who tarries long."

"Hast thou ever beheld the men of Islam in this plight before? Was this the Islam which we brought with us from Arabia?"

"Oh Mill of Revolving Time! thou hast ground us small; enough; have done; What boots thee to grind us further?"

As the host of the Greeks turned back from thy (India) border, would that in like manner, we had turned back baffled from thy door."

The words quoted above may be characterized as the cry of a defeated people. But it did not represent the better mind of Indian Moslems which refused to be shut behind glass doors. But before it could assert itself fully and decidedly and take command of the community's destiny from the hands of short-sighted men it had to go through a prolonged penance. The secret Wahhabi movement reached its open climax by 1870 in the abortive attack on India referred to in a previous paragraph. The *Dar-ul-harb* theory and its logical corollary, the imperative duty of a *jihad* imposed on the faithful and pious Moslem, intruded themselves into public view with all their menace to the peace and prosperity of a country inhabited by a composite population. Leaders of Moslem opinion hastened forward to repudiate the logic of the Wahhabi interpretation of Moslem jurisprudence. Maulvi Keramat Ali of Jaunpur, one time Wahhabi missionary and one of the most celebrated Moslem religious teachers of the day, proved that British India was *Dar-ul-Islam*, and that as such it was "unlawful and irreligious" for Indian Moslems to preach a *jihad* against the British government established in the country. The upheaval that is known in history as the "Sepoy Mutiny", was not caused by any appeal to exclusive religious bigotry; it was a frank attempt of "the supporters of the lost cause of the Marhattas and Moghuls" to regain control of the machinery of the State in India.

The repudiation of the *Dar-ul-harb* theory in its application to India through the pen and voice of Maulvi Keramat Ali of Jaunpur was the ultimate stage of the process of penance, the deliverance of the Moslem mind in India from the thralldom of an exclusive religious bigotry out of tune with mid-19th century rationalism, and fraught

## INDIA IN HOME POLICY

with danger to a country where men of different faiths must learn to live peacefully as neighbours, where "each other's fire" cannot but be visible to each other, and where they must pull their full weight if the country were to evolve into an equal among equals in the comity of nations. This is an aspiration unrealized yet. More so was it so when the Moslem community were sulking in their tents while the surging tide in the national life was sweeping over India in the middle of the last century. Intensely conservative, with a conservatism seeking to protect their communal life by the adoption of what is called in Hindu social theory as *Kurma-Niti*—the attitude of withdrawing into itself as a turtle does when it scents or apprehends the approach of a stranger—"unaccustomed to competition", and not understanding that the pre-eminence they had always held in legal and administrative posts could ever be questioned or threatened, they failed to advance with the times. In 1839 Persian ceased to be the court language of British India, and the Moslem *intelligentsia* lost the monopoly which they had hitherto held, eighty years after political power had passed out of their hands, in service under the government. After the "Mutiny" Moslems in general and the inhabitants of the tract of the country extending from round about Delhi in the West to Behar in the east "lost caste" with the British Government for their leadership in organizing it. The result was an economic break-down, and dispersal of men, east and west, in search of occupations. The initiation of Western methods of industrialism coincided in time with this disintegration in the social and economic life of northern India, and many among the masses belonging to these districts found work in the rising and growing port of Calcutta, in the railway lines, in mines, and factories. A host of Moslem *intelligentsia* sought and found asylum and livelihood in the Nizam State and other Moslem courts. This was the period of penance when the Moslem community was slowly but surely throwing off the apathy and indifference which seemed to have settled like a pall upon them. The world knows that Sir Sayyad Ahmad, who had flirted at one period of his life with the doctrinal rigidities of Wahhabism, was the representative man among Indian Moslems, throwing off all the conceit of superiority and the spirit of irreconcilable separatism, and accepting the new light from the West; he represented the "young Moslem" in India who dared meet all on equal terms and was not afraid to see the "others' fire." But he had precursors represented by Nawab Abdul Lateef (Bengal) Nawab Amir Ali (Behar). They frankly accepted the advantages and limitations of the conditions introduced into India by British rule, and bent all their energies to the task of educating their community to a like acceptance and adoption. The National Muhammedan Association was started in Calcutta (1855) with the object of uniting all classes of Moslems for work for the furtherance of the common good. For reasons which one can understand though he may regard them as short-sighted, these Moslem leaders stood out for "separate consideration" for Moslem interests. In the field of education also they chose to play a lone hand. The benefactions left by Haji Mohammed Moshin (1806) were not circumscribed by any consideration of creed. Nearly fifty years after, Moslem leaders woke up to the fact that—"a Fund founded by a Muham-



median primarily for Muhammedans" should be benefitting the Hindus, who had been more prompt to take advantage of the educational facilities afforded by the Fund. This spirit of separatism flourishes under various disguises, and expresses itself in political discussions sometimes as possessing a special importance as the gate-keepers of India; sometimes as still capable of carrying on the traditions of imperial rule, sometimes calling in the aid of Pan-Islamism to restore the balance disturbed by Moslem weakness in India. Sayyad Jelal-ud-din Afghani, born in Iran and educated at Bokhara, was the prophet of this new orientation in Islam's world-policy. Sultan Abdul Hamid supported this movement as a barrage erected to intercept the aggression of European Imperialism. Sir Sayyad Ahmad gave expression to the current Moslem feeling on the second contention in a historic speech as follows:—

"We the Mohammedans are those who ruled India for six or seven hundred years. From our hands the government was taken by the English. Is the Indian Government not so foolish as to suppose in seventy years we have forgotten all our grandeur and our Empire"?

The mentality that diverts and deflects national energies from the main current of building up a composite national life in India had its birth a century back. It has been exercising the heart and intellect of the country to find a way out of this impasse. As a preliminary to a right understanding of the problem and its right solution some such historical presentation must be attempted as has been done above.

The many forces that were generated by methods of British administration and enlightenment have been traced above. These have disrupted many centres of our community life, but have **Synthesis of Efforts** also helped to create new ones round which have gathered and consolidated the sentiments and interests of the people.

In the realm of the spirit, in the region of invisible things there was unrest; new dogmas challenged the old that had satisfied the cravings of the human heart and mind in India. This challenge gave birth to the Wahhabi movement, the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, and the brotherhood that emanated from Ram Krishna Paramhansa Deva. All these stirrings of the human spirit were born responsive to the questionings precipitated by the failure of Indian institutions to the stand up to the new-comer from the West with his new values of human personality and fellowship. These called for new groupings of thought and life incarnated in the new institutions of our associated effort. British administration and enlightenment offered solutions for the new problems raised in the country. The Indian mind winnowed them out, guided by the wisdom of centuries, rejecting some, accepting others. The synthesis of these rejections and acceptances is embodied in the various institutions that have been working in our midst these hundred years and more.

This synthesis of efforts have contributed in no small measure to the deepening and broadening of what is generally called the public life of the country. In the fields of administrative and political developments the new rulers initiated policies and raised hopes that demanded fulfilment. Promises, parliamentary and royal, declared for the ending of

**British Promises  
of  
Equal Status**

inequalities and distinctions between the rulers and the ruled. The earliest of such promises were made as far back as 1833 when it was declared :

"That no native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of his Majesty, resident therein, shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company."

When the East India Company handed over the administration of India to the British Crown, Queen Victoria in her proclamation dated the first of November, 1858, declared :

"We held ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our subjects, and those obligations by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil."

".....It is our further will, that so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge."

".....We do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us, that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects."

These promises were considered by the first few generations of English educated Indians as the Magna Charta of their rights and liberties ; they learnt to read into them a new spirit of governance. This new spirit inspired them to launch into those open and organised political struggles, the first stirrings of which have been indicated above. For the redress of grievances, removal of abuses and promotion of political interests, the technique of public meetings, protests, petitions, prayers and deputations have been a new development in the history of the world, East and West, since the third decade of the 19th. century. Where it had been the custom to break into disturbances and rebellions to draw the attention of the ruling authorities to popular grievances, it became the custom to organize public demonstrations of wordy revolt to secure the same object. Our ancestors took to these with an avidity and an innocence of belief in their efficacy that appear pathetic to-day. The grievances which first moved them to record protest and petition for redress were concerned with particular acts and activities of the government. What they were in Bengal have been discussed in a previous paragraph.

In Madras we find Guzulu Lakshminarasu Chetty, as early as 1843, financing and starting a paper—*The Crescent*—with one Mr. Harley as editor. The editor has served in the army, and brought to the conduct of the paper the spirit of his former life. The object of the paper was declared to be "the amelioration of the condition of the Hindus". Lakshminarasu Chetty was a self-made man, self-educated ; his biographer summed up his life by saying that he "lived in days when he had not merely to educate himself, but educate the people" in their duties to society, in their rights and privileges. The first question that brought him to public life against the government of the Marquis of Tweeddale, the then governor of Madras, was the proselytizing practices of the missionaries and "the countenance openly given to their cause by not a few of the English functionaries". In Lionel J. Trotter's "History of

Beginnings of  
Political Agitation  
in Madras

the British Empire in India" is described the dissatisfaction of the people with the state of affairs which broke out into riots, that at Tinnevely (1846) being specially mentioned. Mr. Lewis, judge of the Sadr Court, was removed from office for opposition to executive high-handedness. Commenting on this the historian says:

"Mr. Lewis' treatment at the hands of the Madras Government for his bold defence of the judgment passed by himself and his brethren of the Sadr Court seemed to justify the charge rife against that Government of using its high powers as a missionary, partisan, not as the ruler of a non-Christian realm."

Lakshminarasu Chetty carried this agitation to the notice of the Court of Directors at London. The memorial signed by over twelve thousand people was shelved. But the publicity given to the matter in the press and the platform curbed the zeal of the missionaries. In this fight Lakshminarasu Chetty was helped by George Norton, Advocate-general of Madras, and John Bruce Norton, another leading lawyer. On the eve of the renewal of the Company's Charter (1853) Mr. Danby Seymour M. P. came to India to personally enquire into the grievances of the Indian people. The Madras public man accompanied him in his tour through certain districts, and both of them were witnesses to the "tortures" that were inflicted on ryots failing to pay their revenue dues timely to the State-landlord. On a motion by Mr. Seymour in the British House of Commons (1854), a commission of enquiry was set up, and the practice "condemned". The Madras Native Association was founded in 1852, and under Lakshminarasu Chetty's guidance a petition was presented to Parliament detailing the grievances of the people. The petition premised by saying:

"That the grievances of your petitioners arise principally from the excessive taxation and the vexations which accompany its collections, and the insufficiency, delays and expenses of the Company's Courts of Law; that their chief wants are the construction of roads, bridges and works for the supply of irrigation, and a better provision for the education of the people; they also desire a reduction of public expenditure, and a form of local government more generally conducive to the happiness of the subjects and the prosperity of the country".

The Madras Native Association sent a representation suggesting the transfer of the government of India to the British Crown. The British Indian Association, and also the Bombay Association sent representations making identical suggestion, and putting forth similar demands. In the first annual report of the British Indian Association of Calcutta, the Committee of the Association specially drew attention to the correspondence that they had opened with prominent men of other provinces, and noted "the formation at Poona, Madras and Bombay successively of Associations of a similar character which, though they have elected to carry on operations independently of each other, cannot but largely contribute towards the important end of acquainting the British public with the state of feeling in India with regard to its past and future administration". Here do we notice the germs of that all-India sentiment which took shape nearly thirty years later in the Indian National Congress. The heroic and successful fight of the Bengal indigo ryots against the indigo planters was keenly watched by people in other provinces; when the Revd. James Long, the friend of the ryots, was passing through Madras on his way to Britain (1862), the citizens honoured him by presenting an address to him, headed by

**Hafiz Sadrool Is'am Khan, B.A., M. Venkataryoloo Naidu and V. Rajaratnam Moodally.** The end of the Lytton regime finds Madras pulsating with a new life—Rangiah Naidu, G. Subramanya Iyer, S. Viraraghavachariar, Salom Ranaswami Mudaliar, and Chakravarty Vijayraghavachariar leading public life. The last is still happily with us. His solution of the Indian political tangle is the elimination of the British Parliament from Indian concerns, the symbol of British connection being the King of Britain as he is of the other Dominions.

A parallel movement of reform and reconstruction was proceeding in Bombay and Maharashtra. The first products of British education

**In Bombay & Maharashtra**

"Young Bombay" as they were called, were forging ahead with their watch-word of Reform, religious, social, intellectual and political. Naoroji Furdunji popularly known as "Naoroji Master" to distinguish him from Dadabhai Naoroji who was known as "Naoroji Professor", and Dr. Bhanuji—these were the leading spirits in starting the Bombay Association (1852) under the auspices of which the organization and conduct of "the first political movement" in the Presidency was set on foot. The *Rast-goffer* (Truth-Teller) started in 1851 carried their message to the country. Soon after Dadabhai Naoroji transferred his activities to London where in 1866 he founded the East India Association "for the independent and disinterested advocacy and promotion by all legitimate means of the interests and welfare of India generally". Many British public men, and retired Anglo-Indian officials are found connected with it. Young men from India who had increasingly begun to go out of the country for education in British universities and in the Inns of Courts found in Dadabhai their guide, philosopher and friend in more than one sense. At a meeting of the Association (1867) we find the first president of the Indian National Congress to be, Mr. W. C. Bonerjee, reading a paper on "Representative and Responsible Government for India" and the second, third and the sixth presidents of that organization, Dadabhai Naoroji, Badr-ud din Tyabji, and Pherozeshah Merwanji Mehta taking part in the discussion. In what a minor key were the proposals in support of the claims of India pitched, and how warily did the young Indian speakers walk, every minute fearful of treading on the corns of British conceit or interests! The class represented by the names given above accepted the superiority of the British values of life, and were sincerely vigorous in their convictions and utterances. With all their limitations they were the builders of the New India as we have it to-day. The class included lawyers and doctors, journalists, educationists, the school master "abroad", and government servants. This class professed and possessed a unity of feeling greater than anything existent in any other section of the Indian people. They were the first to transcend the particularisms that divided the country, provincial, caste, and occupational. They became "consciously Indian". And they reacted as Indians to any attack on the honour or interests of their country. In the time dealt with here they formed only a "microscopic minority" of the more than two hundred millions that inhabited India. But they were the leaven that leaveneth the whole lump.

Mahadev Gobind Ranade, "the prince of graduates", may be accepted as a representative of this class. More than one writer, Indian and foreign, have said that no Indian in the British period reached the height of Ram Mohun Roy's intellectual perceptions and the breadth of his vision, the imperturbability of his temper, and persistence in the path of duty as God had given him to understand it, except it be Mahadev Govinda Ranade and Sir Sayyad Ahmmad. Mahadev Govind Ranade's social and political thought and conduct was based on (1) a frank recognition of the weaknesses of his country, (2) hearty approval of the British connection, (3) recognition of the "inevitable drawbacks" of that connection. What they were was indicated by Sir Richard Temple who closed a long and distinguished official life in India as governor of Bombay :

"..... although political talent, statesmanlike ambition and administrative power fail to be fostered under British rule, still there are ample fields for learned research, for literary taste, for social reform, for poetic culture, for philosophic meditation—, in short, for general culture, both varied and comprehensive".

Of particular value in this process of "culture" opened out by the new education was the scientific research into many lines of intellectual, social, religious, historical, archeological and aesthetic interest in which ancient and mediæval India expressed itself. In the days of Sir William Jones, it was called the "discovery of Sanskrit." Mahadev Govind Ranade and his class appreciated, and availed themselves fully of, the opportunities and advantages of this "discovery." Raja Rajendra Lal Mitra, Sir Ram Krishna Bhandarkar are outstanding pioneers in this line of development.

By the time Mahadev Gobind Ranade had entered service under the Government in the Judicial Department he had settled down to his life's work also—reform of society and reform of the State. Ganesh Vashudeo Joshi had founded at Poona the Sarvajanic Sabha (1870). But Mahadev Gobind Ranade was the power behind the activities of this organisation, for which he enjoyed much "Irish promotion" into the outlying districts of the presidency, as he had become "politically suspect with the Lytton administration." As a result of these activities Poona carved out a new place for herself as a competitor with Bombay in the leadership of all progressive movements. Bombay was cosmopolitan, Poona was nationalist. And in this evolution of Poona, Vishnu Sastri Chiplunkar played the dominant part. The "historic" role played by him is thus expressed by Narasimha Chintamon Kelkar in his biography of Lokamanya Tilak :

"If it be contended that Tilak got the torch from Chiplunkar's hands, it was he, without the shadow of a doubt, who kept it burning and shining in his day with a bright flame. If it be said that Tilak borrowed the brick from Chiplunkar, it must be equally conceded that he left it marble. And both these pioneers are revered by posterity, Chiplunkar as the father of Nationalism in Maharashtra, and Tilak as a more illustrious son who spread the patriotic spirit to all quarters of the country".

The London *Graphic* in an obituary notice of Vishnu Sastri's spoke of him as "one of those pioneers of progress, who, if they become numerous enough, will some day make India a self-governing community."

People had by this time been recovering from the demoralisation of the "Sepoy Mutiny". Quicker methods of communication were erasing distances, physical and cultural. The famines that devastated Orissa, Behar and north Bengal, Madras and the Deccan had called forth sympathy wide and deep from all parts of India. The north-west frontier had been sucking mints of Indian money into the erection of a stable and scientific frontier. Lord Northbrook had not been many months in the country before he had convinced himself of the existence of an "uneasy and dissatisfied feeling" in the country. And all over the country open and organized expression to this feeling was being given. Keshab Chandra Sen by his All-India tours (1864 and 1867), in furtherance of his religious and social ideas, had pointed out to the possibility of bringing men belonging to different provinces and speaking different languages on one common platform. The "unity of India" was a topic of constant discussion in the press which could be given concrete shape only by starting an all-India association holding its sessions in cities in different provinces. In Lord Lytton's time the order of the Secretary of State reducing the age of aspirants to the Indian Civil Service from 21 to 19, evoked an all India protest, and Surendra Nath Banerjee helped to widen and consolidate the feeling by his tours through the provinces, all moved by a "common grievance and the inspiration of a common resolve". In course of this tour in the Punjab Surendra Nath drew to public life and public service Sardar Dayal Singh Majethia, who by his benefactions made it possible for progressive and liberal movements to function in the Province. The Delhi Darbar on the occasion of the proclamation of the assumption of the title—Empress of India—by Queen Victoria brought many representatives of educated India to it where they had an opportunity of common deliberation. It is on record that Mahadev Gobind Ranade and Ganesh Vashudeo Joshi canvassed among their fellow-guests the practicability of forming an all-India institution for the discussion of all-India problems and the adoption of all-India measures for their solution.

While the educated community were thus feeling their way to rearing up an all-India organisation competent by its prestige and authority to direct popular grievances into open and constitutional channels of expression and lawful methods of redress, there appeared evidences that the minds of the masses were moving towards outbreaks of physical violence. For some reason or other Lord Lytton's administration seemed to have brought matters to a head; "the state of things at the end of Lord Lytton's 'reign' was bordering upon revolution. Armed bands were beginning to go about; having the sympathy of the people", said William Wedderburn who was for a time chief secretary to the Government of Bombay. In a pamphlet published by the Bengal National League (Maharaja Sir Jatindra Mohun Tagore was the president of this organisation) appear words that confirm the statement made by Sir William Wedderburn. When "heaven sent us a genius for a Viceroy".....

"..... when matters were almost at their worst, when British supremacy was scarcely worth six months' purchase, that an hitherto unrecognized agency working for peace and goodwill among men, first entered the sphere of practical politics..... when, however, the crisis grew to be really acute, they resolved that more overt measures should be resorted to in order, if possible, to avert what to them seemed an immediately impending and incalculably disastrous calamity".

"Then began they to preach... the doctrine that expression must be given to the hitherto repressed and imprisoned national feelings....., and that this expansion could only safely take the form of overt constitutional agitation, no matter how noisy, or even at first childish, if only it afforded due vent for those bitter and vindictive feelings".

Lord Lytton's Vernacular Press Act and the Arms Act are explained by the apprehensions of revolutionary outbreaks. The growing body of educated public men must have sensed the dangers of the situation and they felt called upon to throw themselves into the breach to avert the calamity of a bloody conflict between an organised government and disorganized masses of people. Allan Octavian Hume, a retired civilian, had knowledge of the dissatisfaction that had been seething in the mass mind of India, and of the desperate measures which a hopeless and helpless mass of people were being driven to adopt in Lord Lytton's time. For the good of the British empire in India upheld by the contentment and self-respect of a people, he invited the co-operation of educated India in his "Open Letter" dated the 1st. March, 1883, to "the graduates of the Calcutta University".

In December of that year the first session of the Indian National Conference was held in Calcutta, in the organization of which the Indian Association and the Central Mohammedan Association had co-operated. It was attended by delegates from almost all the provinces. Next year at Adyar (a suburb of Madras) the delegates to the Theosophical Convention, Indian officials and non-officials, after the close of their advertised work, conferred among themselves at Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Row's place, and resolved to meet in a Indian National Union at Poona in the Christmas week of 1885. This version is taken from Mrs. Besant's book—"How India wrought for Freedom". Another version appears in Ambica Charan Mazumdar's book—"Indian National Evolution". Therein it is stated that Allan Octavian Hume followed his "Open Letter" to the graduates of the Calcutta University by correspondence and interviews with Indian reformers and high officials. He approached Lord Dufferin and put before him his concrete proposal of an organization holding annual sessions in different provincial capitals with the provincial satrap as president. Reform of India's social institutions and the methods of carrying it out would form the agenda of these conferences. Lord Dufferin, however, suggested instead a responsible political organization holding its public sessions "through which the Government might be kept informed regarding the best Indian public opinion", no government officer having had anything to do with it in public, and the Government observing a sort of "benevolent neutrality" towards it. Hume went to Britain to enlist the sympathy and support of liberal-minded and progressive men in behalf of this venture. The preliminaries thus settled, the leaders of Poona working under the auspices of the Sarvajanic Sabha seriously and enthusiastically took in hand the arrangements for the Indian National Congress, for thus has the name

On the eve  
of the  
Congress

been changed in course of a year's discussion. Why was Poona preferred to all other cities in the country for the honour of holding the first session of the Congress, and not Calcutta the capital of the empire where Surendra Nath Banerjee and his fellow-workers had anticipated it by two years, not Madras which took the initiative in taking a definite step in the matter, and Bombay, the capital of the western presidency? This preference must have been intended as a compliment to the virile and watchful public life that had grown up round Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, and Ganesh Vashudeo Joshi. Almost at the last moment owing to the outbreak of cholera at Poona the venue of the Congress was hastily shifted to Bombay where it held its first session on the 28th. December, 1885, at the Gokuldas Tejpal Pathshala.

Thus was the Indian National Congress born, with very modest objects : (1) to enable all the most earnest labourers in the cause of national progress to become personally known to each other ; (2) to discuss and decide upon the political operations to be undertaken during the ensuing year. In the speeches of the early workers in the Congress field loyalty to the British connection was reiterated : "I am patriotic because I am loyal ; I am loyal, because I am patriotic"—words like these were received with cheers and acclamation : the same speaker lived to write in 1906 of the political ideal of India as — "absolute autonomy free from British control"—marking the march of ideas and of events. What they are to-day the world knows. "The more progress people made in education and material prosperity the greater would be their insight into political matters, and keener their desire for political advancement"—this was the hope that W. C. Banerjee predicted. To-day material adversity has added a keener edge to the demand for radical reform in the country. The Indian National Congress would work "to mitigate, if not to eradicate, race prejudices, to disarm creed antipathies, and to remove provincial jealousies"—this had been Ananda Charlu's aspiration for his National organization. That aspiration remains unrealized. Perhaps things must grow worse before they can get better.

A panoramic view of Indian life and thought antecedent to 1885 has been presented above. It showed us a people who were consciously reacting against the pressure of an administrative system based on the assumption and acceptance of racial and cultural supremacy ; it showed us a people who were consciously repudiating that assumption ; it showed us a people the leaders of which had begun to employ "western machinery to overthrow western predominance" ; it showed us also that these leaders depended for the success of their efforts and the fulfilment of their hopes on the righteous instincts of their rulers, on their declarations of policy and their promises ; it showed us that these leaders had no faith in the organized public spirit of their own people for the assertion of their rights and liberties dependant not on human promises but received from on high from their Maker. But these leaders lived to see their methods criticized and decried as "political

Evolution  
of Political  
Thought



mendicancy", and the pioneer of them, Dadabhai Naoroji, glad and proud that he had lived to see that day. It is curious, however, that it was not the politician that first awoke to the unnaturalness of these methods and this politics. It was reserved for people who are called "literary men" to recall the politician from the pursuit of futility, the futility of expecting a ruling authority to divest itself of power under the pressure of "petition, protest and prayer". Vishnu Sastri Chiplunkar in Maharashtra through his monthly the "*Nibandh Mala*", and in Bengal Bankim Chandra Chatterjee through his "*Banga-Darshan*" and Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore through his essays and poems, first drew the attention of their countrymen to methods of self-help. And among politicians, the first to repudiate the ideology of imperialism was Balwant Gangadhar Tilak. This ideology has always sought to cite science in its support. The skin of a people, their nasal index and the girth of their head-piece, the supporters of imperialism have averred, ought to be entered into the assessment of a people's right and eligibility to self-rule. Social usages and disabilities, such as idol worship, child-marriage, interdict on widow re-marriage, illiteracy, untouchability, unapproachability and such other crudities stand as so many bars to self-rule. And a people whose life was tortured and disfigured by such usages, cruel and demoralizing, could never hope to attain self-rule. These were the dominant thoughts which ruled the life and conduct of the early reformers among our people during the British regime. Balwantrao Tilak very early in life, under the impulse of a conviction, born natural in him and not by any ratiocinative process, refused to accept the logic of any such ideology, or its truth and validity. And his conviction flared forth thirty years later in the declaration—"Swaraj is my birth right". Dadabhai Naoroji first brought the word "Swaraj" into currency in modern Indian politics. Since then the word has found place in a royal proclamation.

In the opening years of the present century Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal appeared as the protagonist of the ideas of self-help and self-respect in politics. His English weekly — "*The New India*" was the organ voice of the development. A social and religious reformer who grew under the inspiration of Keshab Chandra Sen and Shiv Nath Shastri, he had lost faith in the religious and social institutions of his people as a centre and citadel of progress. He combined in himself two contradictory qualities, a rugged individuality and a sensitiveness to developing mental and moral disturbances in the atmosphere around himself. The spirit of the reformer kept him at a distance from sympathy with the day-to-day strivings of his people for a better life; his psychological insight into the soul of these strivings brought him nearer to them, and made him their tribune. He was moved, all in spite of his prepossessions, by the triumphant march of Swami Vivekananda through the West asserting the hegemony of Indian thought in the modern world. A kindred soul to the makers of modern India was Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya whose Catholic Christianity found nothing incompatible in loyalty to his country and his country's culture. These were the men who moulded the minds of people for the mighty transformation that India witnessed in 1905 and the succeeding years,

prepared the field in which came Aurobinda Ghosh, who is best described in the words of a fellow-worker of his of that period :

"..... The other leaders of the movement have left their life behind them : Aurobinda has his before him. Nationalism is their last love : it is his first passion. They are burdened with the cares and responsibilities of large families or complex relations : Aurobinda has a small family and practically no cumulative obligations. His only care is for his country—the mother, as he always calls her..... Nationalism, at the best a concern of the intellect with some, at the lowest a political cry and aspirations with others, is with Aurobinda a supreme passion of his soul. Few, indeed, have grasped the full force and meaning of the Nationalist ideal as Aurobinda has done. But of these very few—though their vision may be clear, their action is weak....To see the vision of truth and yet not to be possessed by the supreme passion for it which burns up all other desires and snaps asunder, like ashen bands, all other ties and obligations—this is the divine tragedy of most finer natures....But blessed are they for whom this tragic antithesis between the ideal and the real has been cancelled ; for whom to know the truth is to love it ; to love the truth is to strive after it, and to strive after the truth is to attain it : in whom there is no disparity, either in time or degree, between the idea and its realization : in whom the vision of the ideal, by its own intrinsic strength at once attunes every craving of the flesh, every movement of the mind, every motion of the heart, and every impulse of the will to itself : ..... These are so to say the chosen of God...Their towering optimism, and the Grace of God, turn every evil into good, every opposition to help, every loss into a gain. By the general verdict of his countrymen, Aurobinda stands to-day among these favoured sons of God".

Chittaranjan Das (Dehabandhu) who successfully defended Aurobinda Ghose in the Alipore Bomb case, carried on the tradition of the cumulative protest of India, first registered in Bengal in 1905 ; the abandon of his sacrifice was the urge of a rich nature which knew how to live, and how to deny life. It is noteworthy that his two most forceful colleagues and disciples—Jatindra Mohun Sen Gupta and Birendra Nath Sasmal—should have had the qualities of their leader—qualities that enabled them to grasp the joys of life and drink them to the lees, the qualities that made it easy for them to offer these at the altar of their motherland. Syam Sundar Chakravarty whose nationalism came to him as the natural and instinctive conservatism of a people, with his concrete patriotism rooted in the strength and the weakness of his people, found his highest self-expression in the days of Non-co-operation when his daily, the *Servant*, was a pillar of the movement.

The terrorist movement that had its birth in the turmoil of the Bengal anti-partition agitation has created problems that exercise the statesmanship of both the rulers and the ruled. The former seek to solve it by repression. Mahatma's non-violent *Satyagraha* offers a constructive substitute for violence, individual and national, asserts the right and the duty to do and dare, to "die in one's *dharma*", in the fulfilment of the law of one's own being.

Subramanya Bharati and Chidambaram Pillai, the former by his songs and the latter by his practical Swadeshi gave the first hint of the potentialities that have reached fruition to-day in the ebullient life of Tamil Nad, guided by the cool intellectuality of a culture more Indian than in any other part of the country.

The Andhra movement did not exhaust itself simply by rationalising the plea of linguistic provinces in India. The Andhra Jatiya Kalasala of Manipalnam made an effort to direct energies to the higher reaches of thought and life. Hanumantha Rao spent himself in building up this institution.

Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab, Aswini Kumar Dutta in Bengal were the two most outstanding constructive leaders of public life in their respective provinces. Things were more difficult for the former for reasons, which were some of them social, implicit in the aggressiveness of the Arya Samaj of which Lalaji was one of the first proponents; the other reasons were administrative due to the semi-military regime in the province; its contiguity to the north-west frontier with the menace of Russia ever present to the foreign office at Simla is responsible for "methods of suppression" of which the world had the best demonstration at Jallianwala Bagh in April, 1919.

Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari tested his patriotism in the fire of his community's disapproval, and proved it before all the world as pure gold. Beginning as a Pan Islamist, his faith in the world message of Islam did not stand in the way of his fight for the freedom of his country.

Hakim Ajmal Khan, one of Nature's noble man, brought to the 20th century the graces of the 16th. His personality, avoiding lime-light, was one of the silent forces of Moslem awakening in India.

Mrs. Annie Besant as president of the Theosophical Society was one of the most potent personal influences in our national awakening. Her leadership in the Home Rule Movement (1915-'17) was the fulfilment of a great career working for international fellowship, the last desperate attempt of a British thought-leader to erect a bridge of reconciliation between India and Britain.

Vithalbhai Patel's demonstration of an Indian politician using the resources and limitations of British laws in India to weaken and paralyse British administration in the country.

Babu Mahesh Narayan was one of the unknown makers and builders of modern Behar—unknown to the wider public life of India. He belonged to the type who narrowed their view, so that their sight might be sharpened. Bihar to-day is in the fore-front of India's many fronted battle-line. This proud position has been made possible by the life-work of Babu Mahesh Narayan among others.

Nabin Chandra Bardoloi of Assam and Acharya Gidwani of Sindh came to the national movement carried to it by the swell of new life that flowed into the creeks and corners of India when the flood-gates were opened by Mahatma Gandhi. Their lives, cut short, are a record of promises unfulfilled, and an inspiration to their countrymen.

With ups and downs the movement of Indian thought and activity had been progressing towards a fuller realization of the meaning of human personality, perfecting itself in a life of co-operative effort in the bosom of society. The early reformers had drawn their inspiration from European social and political experiences. These had laid emphasis on the rights of the individual, society and State being regarded as existing

Ethics of  
Individuality

solely to secure respect for these rights. An interpretation of European history has it that 18th. century British liberty was incarnated in a parliament controlling the aristocracy and the monarchy; the paradox resulting therefrom was that the basis of society was not to obey those who governed but to disobey them, control them and make things difficult for them; the economists, Adam Smith and Ricardo, and their propagandists, Cobden and Bright, extended the scope of British liberalism by making the State practically 'evanescent' through the bold idea of reducing its functions to as little as possible, giving the State nothing to do but simply allow individuals to exchange the products of their respective labours; this freedom reached its acme in the forties and fifties of the last century. This liberty of person sanctified the institution of private property, thereby securing the ultimate good of society and State. In social ethics the enrichment of human personality was accepted as the ideal end, the reason for existence of society and State. The society and State that did not afford opportunity for this development deserved to be broken. This philosophy had played its part in the evolution of our social and political thought and conduct also in the last quarter of the 19th century. Social usages that barred this claim—the claim of the human personality for free and unfettered development—came in for condemnation and demanded their abolition. As the fight for political freedom widened, and grew intense, recruits from newer stratas of society were drawn to it, the habits of centuries of a social discipline were disturbed, directing a new insight into traditional life.

The Non-co-operation movement revealed the strength of our social polity by the wide-spread response of the mass-mind, and its weakness

**Ethics of  
Mass Awakening**

by quick relapse into listlessness and indifference. The Khilafat movement has introduced a complexity into Indian life, in so far as it has encouraged the spirit of separatism among Indian Moslems; Maulana Mohammed

Ali was the leading spirit in the enunciation of this dual patriotism for Indian Moslems. And the trials and travails of the last fifteen years have not been able to evolve a unity out of this duality. The non-Brahmin movement in southern and western India was the fore-runner of a development which proved that the Hindu methods of social reform had failed to satisfy and conciliate normal human feelings—methods that paid homage to spiritual elevation but maintained the rigid distinctions between men and men. In the Maharashtra we find its protagonist in Jotirao Fule (born 1827), the founder of the "*Satya Sodhak Samaj*". He was a remarkable personality, the pioneer of education among non-Brahmins of the lower stratum of society, a prolific writer whose books form "the scripture" of the Samaj. Regarded as an anti-Brahmin, his appreciation of the life and labour of Balwantrao Tilak was sincere, evidence of which he gave by arranging for security for the accused, Balwantrao Tilak and Gopalrao Agarkar, in the Sholapur case. His insight into the economic basis of Indian life was proved by his erecting at his own expense the statue of a peasant at the main gate-way of the Poona Congress (1895). To-day that movement has widened its scope, quickened by the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi's fight for the down-trodden. The adi-Dravida and the Adi-

Andhra movements in southern India, the Adi-Hindu and their companion activities in other parts of the country, have given rise to particularistic demands and conceits that stand in the way of evolving a coherent and united life in the country. Linguistic provinces are one such factor. They are, however, a necessary and healthy growth. And in the evolution of this idea Madhusudhan Das, the grand old man of Utkal, was one of the pioneers, as rugged an individualist as ever lived. Pandit Gopabandhu Das affiliated this provincial patriotism to the composite nationalism of India under the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. After centuries of neglect, of frustrations, liberal concessions fail to make any appeal to men; in removing conscious causes of grievances, social distinctions and such other inequalities, men do not secure peace. Therefore it is that men propose that the other cause of grievance rampant to-day, the inequalities of wealth, should be removed to secure this peace. This uneasiness and unrest has become world-wide. And India finds itself to-day fighting on two fronts, one against the inequalities of the British rule, the other against the social and economic inequalities of Indian life.

The classes of educated Indians who had taken the lead in fighting the former had been taught to respect individual liberty and private property. In the old-world Indian polity individuality in the life spiritual was recognised and encouraged, while in social life and economic arrangements it was sought to be canalized into co-operative efforts, upholding a peculiar balance and harmony. This balance and harmony was maintained by the theory of re-incarnation of souls in a series of lives, beginningless and endless, taking shelter in bodies belonging to different strata of society, according to their merits and demerits. These beliefs afford no consolation to men to-day. The old oracles are either dumb, or their messages are incomprehensible. The modern oracles are with us. Our discipleship to British theorists still retains its loyalty. The news of the harmony that is being worked out in Britain between the claims of the individual and the needs of State, "recantation" as some would call it, has reached us. Socialism, rather State Socialism has been called a product of the German mind, a product of Bismarckian methods of harnessing the services of the needy to the chariot-wheel of the State, the State that demands the whole of man, and suffers no rival near or about itself. But we in India have not yet been able to fully realize the logic of this development or accept its validity. This is the psychology of the opposition that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's ideology has met with even from his colleagues in the Indian National Congress. The evolution from the idea of State at the service of the individual to that of the State suppressing the individual has not taken a very long time to come its full circle. As they say in the story book, a time came when industrialism, directed and controlled by the individual profit-making instinct, brutalized the poor by over-working them, and men called upon the State to intercede. Thus did the doctrine of *laissez faire* (let alone) come to be regulated. To-day it finds none to do it reverence. And the State has come to its own, as the ruler of men, of their thoughts and activities.

In our country there is only the beginning of industrialism. But there is poverty. And this poverty seems irremovable except by eliminating the instinct for personal and private profit and greed, except by dividing the existing wealth of the country. Men as sensitive to the sufferings of others advise that the need of the hour is the production of more wealth, and not its division here and now. The tumult and the shouting, heard all round the world, are evidences of a wide-awake consciousness that a social and economic adjustment must be worked out if civilized life is to be continued.

Thus does India's "home polity" find itself merging into world polity. In India the polity is more complicated; she is the battleground of nationalism and socialism. Capture of political power is in many parts of the world a fact realized in the life of the people; they are free to bend their energies to the capture of economic power. In our country both these developments have forced themselves to public view, and demand to be led to their natural culmination. The test for India is more difficult, and more penetrating.

The woman's cause was man's, sang the mid-Victorian post-laureate of Britain. To-day women have lost faith in that chivalry; men also do not find strength and inspiration in it. As a result, women have decided to claim and have a determining voice in making a new thing of the mis-shapen, man-made world. Science has placed at our hands mighty instruments for making a better world—man has failed to do it. So it was time that woman should take a hand in the affair. The women's movement in India, as represented by the All-India Women's Conference and the innumerable sectional and communal organisations, as a separate activity, gives shape and form to this aspiration on the part of Indian women to play their legitimate and rightful part in building up New India. Individual women in India have gone forth as pioneers, and have proved the possibility of women taking part in public movements and organizing them. The first Indian name that appears of these pioneers, was that of Pandita Ramabai, a Marhatta lady. Mrs. Annie Besant's many-sided activities must have been an inspiration to many women, the products of modern education in India. Education had been accepted as the very lever of all progress, and in this activity women's contributions have been many and varied, both in quantity and quality.

To-day all these are found synthesized in the All-India Women's Conference. Its history is an interesting story. As in other parts of the world so in India time-forces, to use a hackneyed phrase not quite explanatory of the many developments in social life, have compelled men to call in women to council, on the principle, perhaps, that two heads are better than one. The latest report of the All-India Women's Conference has it that the "original stimulus" of the idea was

"an appeal made by the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, at a prize-giving function of the Bethune College, Calcutta, in which he called on Indian Women to 'tell us with one voice what they want, and keep on telling us till they get it.' Mrs. A. L. Huidekoper, an ex-Principal of Bethune College,.....made use of this appeal

Test for  
India

Women's  
Movement  
in India

All-India  
Women's  
Conference

as the basis of two articles which were published in *Stri Dharma*, the monthly magazine of the Women's Indian Association....."

This appeal and the two articles in the *Stri Dharma* led Mrs. Margaret E. Cousin, Secretary of the Women's Indian Association, Adyar (Madras) to address an appeal in the autumn of 1926 to women all over the country "to form local committees and hold Constituent Conferences in each of the provinces and in certain other clearly defined districts and Indian States, for the purpose of declaring their views on problems of education." In response to this appeal Constituent Conferences were held in 22 places during the months of September to December 1926. And the wide and lively enthusiasm evoked by these conferences was solidified in the 1st session of the All India Women's Conference held at Poona on the 5th to 8th January 1927, with Her Highness Maharani Chinnabai Gaekwad, Maharani of Baroda as President. The resolutions passed related to matters educational only, except the resolution on early-marriage, and another in support of Sir Harising Gour's Age-of-consent Bill. This extension of interest has widened at every session, till to-day no subject of national interest is outside the purview of the Conference, as its "sections" and "sub-committees" testify. There are the educational and social "sections"; there are the Sarda Act sub-committee, the Indigenous Industries Sub-Committee, Rural Reconstruction Sub-Committee, and the Sub-Committee on Labour. Women's education in all its stages, social usages that stand in the way of individual and social development, and women working in mines, and factories and mills are the concern of the appropriate committees which study the problems connected therewith and deal with them.

There have been ten sessions of the Conferences, the last held being at Trivandrum, the capital city of Travancore in the last week of December 1935. The second session (1928) was held at Delhi, Her Highness the Begum mother of Bhopal presiding; the third (1929) at Patna, Her Highness the Dowager Rani of Mandi presiding; the fourth (1930), at Bombay, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu presiding; the fifth (1931) at Lahore. Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi presiding; the sixth (1932) at Madras, Mrs. P. K. Ray presiding; the seventh (1933) at Lucknow, Lady Ramanbhai Neelkanth presiding; the eighth at Calcutta, Lady Abdul Quadir presiding; the ninth at Karachi, Mrs. Rustomji Furidonji presiding. The tenth session was presided over by Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore.

There was an appropriateness in the All-India Women's Conference holding its session in Kerala, of which Travancore forms an important unit,—Kerala which is known as "Penmalayam"—"Women's Malayalam." The social polity based on the matriarchal system makes woman the head and fountain of all power and beneficence; succession is traced through her. The tenth session was thus held in the right atmosphere where woman's experience as the head of a State, as the head of family and social life could point out to lessons of efficiency and on equity which ought to be the guide and ideal of the woman's movement in India. These the Maharani-President brought out vividly in her address.

Significance of  
Travancore  
Conference

The All India Women's Conference is a non-party and a non-partisan organisation. Fortunately for itself it had not to struggle for the political recognition of women in India; that recognition had been won by the great war for British women, and their Indian sisters enjoy the fruits of the labours of the Despard and Pankhursts. The principle that woman has of right a place in the making of laws as she has in the making of the home has been recognized. Indian women have now to work for details some of which they embodied in their Memorandum to the Franchise Committee set up in connection with the Hoare scheme of constitutional changes for India. The claim of Indian women "to fight elections on equal terms with men, in mixed general electorates," as also that with regard to "adult suffrage," and for "no reservation of seats for women as such"—none of them has been accepted by the Government. The "communal decision" of the "National Government" of Britain has disappointed these "clear" demands of Indian women.

The activities of the Conference are coming into contact with centres of Indian life hitherto neglected by educated women. Dirt, disease and ignorance smother healthy growth in India; when educated women come face to face with them, their removal will become possible and the "life beautiful" will emerge out of them. Then will Indian women contribute "their due share in the task of Nation-building" as they do to-day in building and keeping up homes.

We have tried to trace India's evolution in course of a hundred years of British rule. The immediate past, the last fifteen years, has witnessed an upheaval, the "high audacity" of which has been an eye-opener to both the rulers and the ruled. The period which is covered by the present volume of the "Annual Register" is marked by calm after a storm—the storm that blowed on the wake of the two Civil Disobedience Movements. The first started under Mahatma Gandhi's personal direction; after his incarceration the momentum received from him carried it through to almost the end of 1930; during the latter months the driving force was imparted by Pandit Matilal Nehru, one of the patricians of an earlier generation with its faith in British generosity and statesmanship intact through many disappointments. To Matilalji the Punjab under Sir Michael O'Dwyer was a revelation. Since then the old man knew no respite from fight, and he died fighting. His contemporary, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, stands as a rock, the symbol of India's eternal quest of freedom and of peace. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact secured a temporary truce; it was valuable as an indication of the true path to reconciliation between the rulers and the ruled, not for any immediate and tangible gain.

What this path is has been sketched by J. Coatman in his book —"Years of Destiny":

"As long as the Indian feels that they are being treated not only fairly, but as equals, they are not a difficult people to deal with, and Lord Irwin's unprecedented action had given the Indian people the strongest possible assurance that he, at any rate, was not going to allow any false notion of prestige to stand in the way of his dealing with any of their leaders on terms which they could accept without any possible feelings of resentment."



Lord Willingdon succeeded to the Irwin method. He spoke of his ambition to go down to history "as the first constitutional Governor-general" in India. But fate decreed otherwise. He was not, to quote the words of an American author, perhaps temperamentally, perhaps forced by imperial policy, "one to adopt the Conference method in the manner of his predecessor". Therefore do we find him rejecting Mahatma Gandhi's offer as carried in his wire of 29th. December 1931—"whether you expect me to see you and receive guidance from you as to the course I am to pursue in advising the Congress". The historian of India need not go further than the American writer in his judgment on Lord Willingdon's regime.

His Excellency Lord Linlithgow does not come to the country as a "stranger". He came to India as Chairman of the Royal Agricultural Commission, and got to know something of the "real life" of the people. His interest in agricultural life and progress in his own country finds outlets and opportunities for wider service to the teeming agricultural population in India. His meeting a batch of Deccani agriculturists on landing in Bombay as Governor-General is significant of developments in rural life. In his first speech broadcasted to all parts of India and addressed to all classes he exhorts the "Civil Service" to "know your villages", and offers a new interpretation of their duties in eloquent words—"For you in your own generation it remains abundantly true that the tent is mightier than the pen". These words of Lord Linlithgow convey to us hints of a new policy which he desires to pursue in India. Whether this policy is inspired by personal inclination or by the necessities of a State where agriculturists form the majority of the population, it is not necessary to enquire now. In the long role of British administrators in India one other name only emerges who was sincerely interested in agricultural life and progress; it is Lord Mayo's. During his tenure of office the Department of Commerce and Agriculture was inaugurated. The State in India was the biggest landlord, a "great forest proprietor," and a "great mineral proprietor". The exploitation of these riches was part of the duty of the administration co-operatively with British enterprise. Lord Mayo was the first to realise the importance, financial and political, of this dual function. His insight into India's agricultural condition, and methods of its improvement, is acutely expressed in his notes:

"I do not know what is precisely meant by 'amonoic manure'. If it means guano, super-phosphate or any artificial product of the kind, we might as well ask the people of India to manure their ground with champagne"

Again, in another note, he writes

"In connection with agriculture we must be careful of two things. First, we must not ostentatiously tell native husbandmen to do things which they have been doing for centuries. Second, we must not tell them to do things which they can't do, and have no means of doing. In either case, they will laugh at us, and they will learn to disregard really useful advance when it is given"

We do not know if these warnings of Lord Mayo's were called forth by "experts" or enthusiasts in his time in India. The same warnings have need of repetition by Lord Linlithgow to the "experts"

and enthusiasts who have been crowding into India at the invitation of the Government.

"The cultivator tilling his fields remains as ever the backbone of this country and the foundation of her prosperity", said Lord Linlithgow in reply to the address of the Bombay Corporation.

**Rural  
Indebtedness**

The peasantry of India on whose shoulders rest the huge fabric of a modern government are, however, unequal to maintaining this burden. Long ago Lord Cromer (he was then Evelyn Baring) recognized that India could support at best a cheap despotism. And British rule, however benevolent, is a very costly despotism, or bureaucracy if one must have it so. Over and above this, a debt of Rs. 1,800 crores is crushing all hope and all initiative out of him whose "life is a long-drawn question between a crop and a crop". And the government of Lord Linlithgow must look on helpless faced by a poverty as wide as this, and a distress which centuries have taught the trick of remaining mute and silent. Other countries may do brave things for the relief of unemployment; we in India have nothing better than the vaguest of idea of unemployment figures in the country. The government cannot show any better knowledge in the matter. Rural decay is a fact and continues to be so, for men flee from decay. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research which hopes to successfully battle with this decay by reviving rural industries, by its "planned campaign for the uplift of the ryot," will need the goodwill and the co-operation of all. The conditions of successfully enlisting that good-will and co-operation have yet to be fulfilled. Debt Redemption and Conciliation Acts can touch but the fringe of the problem. Rural credit has been shaken by these Acts, and Land Mortgage Banks under State-control will take decades to take shape and be able to meet even a moiety of the whole demand for agricultural short-time credit. Co-operative banks play a very insignificant part in offering facilities to the peasantry in need of cash. The Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee's majority report present certain figures which are revealing in this connection. In Bombay the financial requirement of the agricultural population was Rs. 32 crores 50 lakhs; the co-operative organisations supplied about Rs. 2 crores 20 lakhs. In Bengal the short and medium term need was for Rs. 96 crores, as against Rs. 4 crores supplied. In Madras no provincial estimate was forthcoming; in its absence the estimate of the Tanjore district helped to arrive at an idea; the cost of one crop of paddy in the wet delta area was Rs. 3 crores 50 lakhs; the co-operative societies supplied Rs. 17 lakhs 50 thousand. In face of these needs, and the widening responsibilities that provincial governments are preparing themselves to assume, the controversies over the Niemeyer report and the heart-burning and provincial jealousies developed, appear how unreal and how petty!

Economists, administrative or theoretical, have been trying to stir up public opinion to the danger of over-population in the country.

**Over-population & Unemployment**

They assert that by 1941, the population will number 40 crores which the present national income will be unable to maintain. The pessimist among them say that the problem of "relieving the growing pressure on the soil is insoluble" and that the fullest industrial development cannot hope

to absorb more than 30 lakhs of workers, that is making provision for the maintenance of one crore and a half of men, women and children. In 1921 an estimate showed that there were about 5 crores agriculturists who have been forced out of their lands. How few of these have found employment? A question which none can give a satisfactory reply to. Indian Society has never cared to consciously trouble its head over this problem, depending on nature and nature's God to establish a satisfactory relation and proportion between feeding mouths and provision for food. To such a society these warnings and exhortations—what are they but "bourgeoise" economics, inspired by communal considerations! When the political future of the country is to be ruled by communal votes, every community must strive to return an increasing number at each successive census to the confusion of all economists. Communal cries will fill hungry mouths. How does his Excellency Lord Linlithgow propose to cure this madness? In a letter of his addressed to the heads of provincial governments appear the words: "..... there is no point in trying to improve the breed of cattle if the fodder is not there for their nourishment". The same question with the substitution of the word "men" for "cattle", is writ large over India, waiting for a reply.

Lord Linlithgow has succeeded to a political stale-mate in the country. The Indian National Congress may cease from troubling, and may be at rest from weariness. But the dissatisfaction that the Congress voices, has it ceased or has it sought rest? Reply to this question must be the quest of his Excellency. What the Government of India Act of 1935 was intended to secure for British interests Lord Linlithgow knows, for it is partly his handi-work. What it secures to India we can imagine. The British Parliament is anxious to endow Indians with "real responsibility for Indian social conditions". Social conditions to-day are incapable of divorce from economic and political factors. These economic and political factors have not been made amenable to Indian initiative and Indian control. How Lord Linlithgow proposes to shape these within the frame-work of the Government of India Act only the future can show. It would be unjust to anticipate developments and pass judgment thereon. Lord Linlithgow also is not free; he must fit himself into the system which has passed through many transformations. But the spirit of domination that has informed its activities in connection with the "dependent" parts of the empire remains, retaining its old-time vigour. This is the meaning of the "safeguards" which Lord Linlithgow must defend in the interests of Britain. Bearing in mind even all this, there will be few Indians who cannot respond to his appeal to remember him in their prayers.  
(Specially contributed by *Sf. Suresh Chandra Deb.*)

# King George the V's Reign

## EARLY LIFE

His Most Excellent Majesty George V, King of Great Britain and Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas and Emperor of India was the only surviving son of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. He was born at Marlborough House, London on June 3, 1863, and when four years old he and his elder brother, Prince Albert Victor, who was two years his senior, were placed under the tutorship of the Rev. John Neale Dalton, the curate of Sandringham.

In the year 1877, Prince George was sent with his elder brother the late Duke of Clarence to the *Britannia*, there to be trained for a naval career. The brothers were as dissimilar in appearance as in temperament—the elder fragile of frame, thoughtful and pensive; the younger (Prince George) though not very robust physically, full of vigour, high-spirited with an under-current of mischievous humour. They were placed in the tutorial charge of Mr. Lawless, and except for the fact that they were berthed in separate cabin, shared the ordinary life and routine of the ship. It was not an easy routine by any means, for the lads were on deck at half-past six, and had to use their muscles as well as brains. They were taught the humbler arts of seamanship—the management of sailing boats, sail-making, rope-splicing and other duties essential for a naval career. The two Princes remained on the *Britannia* for about two years, and during the whole of the time the vessel was stationary in the River Dart.

Their course on the *Britannia* completed, the two Princes were sent to H. M. S. *Bacchante* to learn their business in great waters and see the wonders of the world, especially those of the British Empire. Prince George was then just over fourteen, and was a lively dashing lad with a reputation among his comrades for dash and masterfulness. They went first to the West Indies, crossed back to the island off West Africa, rounded the Cape, went south to Australia, and thence to Fiji, Yokohama Hongkong and Singapore, returning home via the Suez Canal, with an excursion ashore into the Holy Land. Thus by the time he was sixteen Prince George had seen far more of the world and its divers races than had ever any Prince of the West or the East.

Prince George took to the life with a zest that was to make him one of the best naval officers of his time, and he was an excellent mathematician, with the makings of a senior wrangler.

At the close of this tour in 1882 the brothers separated. Prince George, who remained in the naval service was appointed to H. M. S. *Canada*, commanded by Captain Durrant, on the North American and West Indian Station, and was promoted sub-lieutenant. On his return home he passed through the Royal Naval College at Greenwich and the gunnery and torpedo schools, being promoted lieutenant in 1883.

A year later he was appointed to H. M. S. *Thunderer* of the Mediterranean Squadron, and was subsequently transferred to H. M. S. *Dreadnought* and H. M. S. *Alexandra*. In 1889 he joined the flagship of the Channel Squadron, H. M. S. *Northumberland* and in that year was in command of torpedo boat No. 79 for the naval manoeuvres. In 1890 he was put in command of the gunboat H. M. S. *Thrush* for service on the North American and West Indian Station. After his promotion as Commander in 1891 he commissioned H. M. S. *Melampus*, the command of which he relinquished on the death of his brother, Albert Victor, the Duke of Clarence, in January 1892, since his duties as eventual heir to the Crown precluded from devoting himself exclusively to the Navy. He was promoted Captain in 1893, Rear-Admiral in 1901, and Vice-Admiral in 1903.

The Prince obtained his promotion to the *Thrush* by a fine bit of seamanship during the naval manoeuvres of 1899, when he was in charge of one of the torpedo boats and in a driving gale off the Irish coast succeeded in rescuing a disabled consort.

In November, after a visit to Ireland, he was stricken by an attack of enteric fever. The Princess of Wales was in Russia at the time, and the Prince took upon himself the superintendence of his son's nursing, and hardly left his bedside till the Princess arrived. Happily Prince George recovered, but he had hardly done so when a terrible blow fell on the happy family at Sandringham. The Duke of Clarence

(Prince Eddy) caught a chill early in January, which quickly took a serious turn, and he passed away on January 14.

This sad event placed Prince George in direct succession to the throne, and he assumed his new responsibilities with a seriousness for which he was hardly credited during his breezy sailor days. It also meant giving up his active career in the Navy, which was a great disappointment to him, for although he occasionally got to sea again, it was only at irregular intervals.

After his brother's death Prince George was created Duke of York, and his marriage became a question of great importance and interest, not only to the Royal Family, but to the nation at large.

There was a universal feeling of satisfaction when it was announced that he was engaged to an English Princess, the only daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Teck. Of all the ladies of the Royal Family there was none more popular and beloved than Princess Mary of Cambridge, Duchess of Teck. Her good nature, sympathy, and untiring work in the cause of charity endeared her to all classes. Her daughter, Princess Victoria Mary—Princess "May", as she was then called—brought up in the simple home life of White Lodge, Richmond, entered society with a strong claim on the affections of public as her mother's daughter, and made the claim good by her own personal charm and attractiveness. It is not surprising therefore, that the wedding caused intense pleasure and enthusiasm. It was celebrated at the Chapel Royal, St. James, on July 6, 1893, in the presence of Queen Victoria. Ten princesses, all grand-daughters of the queen, attended the bride as bridesmaids. After the wedding the Duke and Duchess of York took up their residence at York Cottage, Sandringham, and at York House, St. James's.

Later in the year, they made some thing like a royal "progress" to Edinburgh and York, and on their return commenced that busy public life as representative of the Crown, which fitted them so admirably for the exalted position they were destined to occupy in the future. Every year was a continual round of laying foundation-stones, opening buildings, and attending public functions in London and the large manufacturing towns of England, varied by visits to Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Meanwhile a new generation was growing up at York Cottage. On June 33, 1894, Prince Edward was born at White Lodge. Prince Albert, now Duke of York, was born on December 14, 1895, and Princess Mary came to grace the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. But a great grief came upon the family before the end of the Jubilee year, when the Duchess of Teck died at White Lodge on October 27. In 1900 a third son Prince Henry, was born to the Duke and Duchess of York.

For some time before the death of Queen Victoria the idea of the Duke of York making a tour of the British Colonies had been under consideration and in the year 1900 the plan took definite form. The loyal rally of the colonies to the help of the mother country in her hour of need in South Africa seemed to demand some recognition from the Sovereign, and the opening of the first Parliament of the Australian Commonwealth was a fitting opportunity for the Duke of York to visit Australia. All the arrangements had already been made when Queen Victoria passed away in January 1901, but as it was by her express desire that the Duke of York was undertaking the tour, it was not abandoned. On March 18, escorted by two cruisers, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York set sail in the Orient liner *Optic* commanded by a crew of the Royal Navy. At Gibraltar, their Royal Highnesses were welcomed by Sir George White, and at Malta by Sir John Fisher. In Ceylon they were shown the sacred tooth of Buddha, and the Duke was able to perform an act of clemency by securing the return of the exiled Arabi to his native land of Egypt. At Singapore the Duke received the Malay Sultans and the Duchess received their wives. On coming to the equator the Duke, although he had crossed the line before, good-humouredly submitted to the attentions of King Neptune, and took his "saving" and his ducking with a smile, *pour encourager les autres*.

The real business of the tour began at Melbourne. On May 9, in the great Exhibition building the Duke opened the first Parliament of the Australian Commonwealth and the Union Jack was run up over every school in Australia. From Melbourne the Royal party proceeded to Ballarat, Sydney, and Brisbane. They inspected the mines, visited the stockmen in the up-country stations, and in Queensland witnessed a boomerang-throwing performance by the aborigines. At all the large towns, both in Australia and New Zealand, the chief feature of their welcome was the parade of the school children and cadets. How many of these starchy school boys were to give their lives for the King and Empire fifteen years later in Gallipoli, France and Palestine!

The Duke had many reminders of his *Beachtants* visit, such as the trees he and his brother planted at Melbourne; but perhaps the one which appealed most to his sporting instincts was the quail shooting, reminiscent of the policeman's "quail call."

From Australia the *Ophir* steamed to New Zealand, and on June 4 arrived at Auckland, where the Duke and Duchess were welcomed by Mr. Seddon, the premier. Perhaps the most interesting event in New Zealand was the visit to the native settlement when the Maori chief returned to the Duke all the presents they had received from Queen Victoria, to show how carefully they have kept them. Of course he gave them back again. Then followed a great demonstration of native songs and dances, which Their Royal Highnesses witnessed wearing the kiwi mats or mantles which had been presented to them.

From New Zealand the *Ophir* returned to Tasmania and Adelaide, and a cross-country railway journey was made to Perth and the mining district of Coolgardie.

The voyage was continued via Mauritius to South Africa, where Natal and Capetown were visited, and then across the Atlantic to Canada. Great receptions awaited them at Quebec, Ottawa and Montreal, and at these Canadian cities, as in Australia and New Zealand, war medals were presented to the troops who had fought in South Africa, and now and then a Victoria Cross was pinned on a proud and gallant breast. After a day spent in shooting the rapids with the "lumberman" came the long railway journey to Winnipeg, and a visit to the Red Indian chief near Calgary, then across the Rocky Mountains (the Duke riding on the "cow-catcher" of the engine), to British Columbia and Vancouver Island. The return journey gave the Royal party a change of seeing Toronto and the Falls of Niagara.

On October 31, the *Ophir* left Halifax for home, and soon after arrival—on King Edward's birthday, November 9—the Duke of Cornwall and York was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.

A banquet was given at Guildhall on December 5 to welcome Their Royal Highnesses at home. In the course of his speech the Prince startled the assembly with that famous phrase "Wake up, England!" which next day was on everybody's lips.

As Duke of Cornwall, the heir to the throne had already done a great work in strengthening the bonds of union between the British Colonies and the motherland, and had widely increased his personal knowledge of that great Empire over which he was destined to rule. As Prince of Wales he began a career of usefulness at home as the right-hand man of the King. His position differed somewhat from that of his father during the long reign of Queen Victoria. There was not now a monarch living in semi-retirement at Balmoral and Osborne, but a real live King and Queen holding a brilliant court at Buckingham Palace and Windsor. But there was no rivalry of opposition between the King and the Prince. The latter had his own private circle of friends, chiefly his old companions in the Navy, but he and the Princess liked to be with the King and Queen when their engagements permitted, and were frequently to be seen at Sandringham and Windsor, and in the Highlands.

To the Fleet also the King paid several visits, and though here he did not find the excitement and the same sense of nearness to the actual conflict, his old associations with the Navy and his intimate knowledge of the life of the Senior Service invested these visits with special interest for him. Moreover, though for long periods the perilous and unpretentious service of the Navy was receiving little attention from the general public, the King followed all its doings with close attention and an understanding eye. The sea Lords who had audience of the King had always to take great care that they were well-informed.

In every activity in which the Queen could collaborate with the King, Her Majesty was his indefatigable supporter. But there were some feminine movements, like Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and the Needle-work Guild which were particularly the Queen's care. Her interest in such movements was so real that she contrived to make their leaders feel that they were personally answerable to their Queen for the efficient discharge of their duties, and that achievement had a remarkable influence on the organizations to which she lent her name or patronage.

At about three o'clock on the morning of 7th May, 1910, the Admiralty yacht "*Beachtresses*," making for Plymouth from the coast of Spain, received a wireless message of such a nature that it was taken at once to the cabin in which the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, was sleeping. It was a message which fully justified the urgency with which it was transmitted.

"I am deeply grieved," it ran, "to inform you that my beloved father, the King, passed away peacefully to-night.

George

After receiving such news it was impossible for the Prime Minister to resume his rest. He dressed and went up on the deck to reflect upon the meaning of these tidings, which had fallen upon him with shocking suddenness. Such an event had been so little anticipated that, barely a week ago, Mr. Asquith had set out with the First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Reginald McKenna) for a visit to Gibraltar. The first intimation that the King's health was anything but normal had been received the previous day. For a first bulletin it was distinctly alarming, for it was described the King's condition as "most critical." At once the yacht had been turned about, and it was making for England with all speed when the fateful news was received.

On his meditations under the stars as the ship cut its way through calm waters, the Prime Minister recorded later: "I felt bewildered, and indeed stunned. At a most anxious moment in the fortunes of the State we had lost, without warning or preparation, the Sovereign whose ripe experience, trained sagacity, equitable judgment and unvarying consideration counted for so much... His successors, with all his fine and engaging qualities, was without political experience. We were nearing a crisis without example in our constitutional history."

Asquith, never a man to use the language of sensation, did not exaggerate the gravity of the political situation in which King George came to the throne.

It was, as Asquith said, "a crisis without example." At no time had the House of Lords rejected the Budget and thus challenged the right of the Commons to control the finances of the country.

#### CHALLENGE TO LORDS

The Lords had previously rejected some measures put forward by the Liberal Government, and Liberals had begun to feel that the right of the Lords to thwart the elected Government of the day should be challenged in decisive fashion. Because the Peers had always looked upon the Budget as something exempt from their veto, the Government chose the Budget as the measure that would provide the test case. They planned it to goad the Peers, and it succeeded. Once the Lords began to talk of rejecting it, the only anxiety of the Liberals was lest the Peers should change their minds and thus deprive the Ministry of an issue upon which they could dissolve Parliament and ask the country as to whether this veto of the Peers was consistent with a system of democratic government.

There were wise Conservatives who saw the peril in which the Lords were placing themselves. Better swallow the Budget now than be obliged later to wash with a cup of hemlock. To invite an election, they argued, would be to give a new lease of life to a Government whose popularity was already suffering after four years of office. But the Lords did not heed these advisers. They rejected the Budget. Parliament was dissolved and, in January 1910, the Liberals came back to office: but dependent for their majority upon the Irish Nationalists who did not care for the Budget and were interested only in self-government for Ireland. Still the Liberals maintained that they had secured a mandate to abolish the veto of the House of Lords.

After that, of course, the lords let the Budget pass. But worse was to come, so far as they were concerned. They would be faced by a Bill which would limit very drastically their power over all future legislation. In other words, as an effective Chamber, they would be invited to commit suicide.

And suppose they refused?

That was where King Edward was drawn into this very dangerous situation. He would be advised by his Ministers to create a sufficient number of new peers (about 300) to overwhelm the conservative majority in the Lords and thus ensure the passage of the measure.

Before the January election the possibility of his receiving that advice was considered by King Edward, but he cherished the hope that if the Liberals were returned, the House of Lords would not allow the situation to drift to a deadlock that could be solved only by such a fantastic procedure. But should the worst come to the worst he would not take the decisive step unless another election were held in which the terms of the Bill for reforming the Lords was before the country.

The Liberals having come back, and the Lords having passed the Finance Bill, the question of curbing the power of the Peers became the next issue. At this stage in the development of the crisis King Edward died.

What would be the attitude towards this grave problem of the new Monarch who, "with all his fine and engaging qualities was without political experience." Much hung upon his personal view and handling of the situation, because there was no

categorical pledge from King Edward that could be considered binding upon his successor.

The accession of King George improved the atmosphere somewhat. Everyone concerned in the controversy showed a sportsmanlike sympathy with him in the inheritance of this thorny problem. In such an atmosphere it was possible, with the King's active encouragement, to bring the parties into conference on the subject with a view to an agreed solution.

For part of the summer, and again after the vacation, on into the late autumn, representatives of the parties laboured in secret to find a way out of the impasse, but in November Asquith was obliged to report to the King that agreement was impossible. The crisis, after subsiding, had attained another peak. The King was informed that his Ministers were not willing to continue under the old conditions of veto, nor could they advise him to dissolve Parliament unless they had the "reasonable assurance" of the King that, if necessary, he would use his powers of peer-making to swamp the resistance of the House of Lords.

It was an unhappy situation for the new Sovereign, but observed Asquith, "I have never seen the King to better advantage." What impressed the Prime Minister was the way in which the King listened to reasoned argument, recognised that for neither his Ministers nor himself was there any course but the one advised. At the King's wish, the new Parliament Bill was put before the House of Lords before the dissolution, and in December the country was in the throes of a general election for the second time in that eventful year.

In theory, the plan was simple. If the Liberals were returned, it would mean that the Bill for reforming the Lords had been considered and approved by the country; and, after that, surely the Lords would submit without compelling the King to make Peers by the hundred. If the Conservatives came back, then the Bill had been killed by the people; and no peer-making would be necessary.

What happened was that the parties returned in the same numbers as previously. The election did not show that swing of opinion in one way or the other which would have made for peace. So the wrangle continued with even greater asperity.

Worst of all, the King's name was bandied about the political arena. A lesser man might have been tempted to intervene personally, to breathe the spirit of compromise and endeavour to find a formula of agreement. It seemed the natural thing for the King to do. But it would have been constitutionally improper.

There were many, very many, outside the ranks of the Government who would have liked audience of the King with a view to advising him. But the King has only one set of political advisers—the Government. Not until he had ascertained that there would be no objection from the Prime Minister did His Majesty receive even Lord Lansdowne, the Leader of the Conservatives in the House of Lords, and then only to obtain a first-hand report of the views of the dissentient Peers and not to hear advice.

The Lords fought to the last. So probable did it seem that the King would have to act, that Asquith drew up a list of those who would provide the reinforcements for the Upper house. Nevertheless, to the cry of, "Shall we perish in the dark by our own hands, or in the light, kindled by our enemies?" the Peers gave way, and, in the words of one commentator, disappointed three hundred commoners who were "trembling on the brink of ennoblement."

Six years later when the solution of another vexatious problem had been reached, the King wrote to his Prime Minister, "You and I have passed through some strenuous and critical times, and once again, thank God, we have 'weathered the storm.'" The political upheaval of 1910-11 was the first of those crises; and, for the King, it must have been the most difficult, not only because he was new to his responsibilities, but also because the stress of it fell where human nature is weakest. The situation called not so much for action, but for infinite patience and restraint. The natural instinct of a man called to an exalted office is to exercise his powers. In this the King was required, right at the outset of his reign, to show an unflinching awareness of the limitations of his authority, to tread very closely to the boundary of his powers without ever setting a foot over the line. And that he did with supreme success.

Later, the King's relationship towards his Ministers was different in one important respect from what it was in those earlier times. Then he was a new Sovereign surrounded by Ministers who had long experience of statesmanship. Afterwards he had the experience of a quarter of a century at his command. Because of the King's aloofness from party interests people did not think readily of the unique store of



knowledge, of measures and of men, which informed his mind when he dealt with affairs of State.

The conception of a Prime Minister who had been continuously in office for twenty-five years afforded an estimate of the accumulated experience which was at the King's disposal. During the period a succession of statesmen of differing schools of thought, each an expert in political matters, discussed with the King—intimately, privately and without reservation—the problems of the country. Overseas statesmen whose names would make a formidable catalogue had similar talks with the King, while foreign Sovereigns, statesmen and envoys laid before him their view of the problems of the work at large. Having no sectional interests to serve, no last ditch of party pride or policy to defend, His Majesty had a freedom of mind which many of his political visitors envied and respected. His influence at times when party passions ran high was of unestimable value to the country and the empire.

Time and again statesmen testified to the King's conscientious study of all the matters submitted to him, and to his remarkable grasp of the essentials of every piece of business which they were required to discuss with him. The late Lord Brentford (Sir William Joynton-Ricks) had a lawyer's mind quick to appreciate whether the person with whom he was conferring had mastered his case. It was he who said that the Minister who went to the Palace with his case inadequately prepared would soon find himself in a dilemma.

Lord Brentford revealed, also, that inspite of the mass of papers which the King had to read, His Majesty lost no time in dealing with them. At a morning audience, the King discussed a certain matter with his Home Secretary. "Sir," said "Jix" in surprise, "I sent the paper on that matter to the Cabinet only yesterday afternoon." "Quite true," replied the King, "but I read it yesterday evening."

That an audience of the King was a strictly business-like proceeding was obvious from the news of the King's daily round. The time of His Majesty and of the statesmen concerned was too valuable to be spent in dealing with subjects which could be disposed of by action between their respective secretaries.

#### EVN OF GREAT WAR

At times of crisis the King adopted his routine to meet the exigencies of the situation. On the eve of the War he came from his bed in the small hours of the morning and, clad in a dressing gown, had a consultation with the Prime Minister and Lord Tyrrell (then Private Secretary to Sir Edward Grey) about an eleventh-hour telegram to Russia that might turn the scales in favour of peace.

Every considerate person recognized that the lives of the King and Queen would become intolerable were visitors to retail details of their private conversations. If their Majesties had always to be on their guard, always thinking of the possibility of publication before they uttered a word, there would have been an end to that natural conversation with visitors which made it possible for the King and Queen to keep themselves informed of all that was going on in the workaday life of the country. But a trickle of anecdotes inevitably escaped, and of these none was more characteristic of the King than the story told of the first visit to the Palace of a newly appointed Overseas Governor (now dead) who was to receive a knighthood. He was a Labour man of humble beginnings, who had been a worker in the furniture trade, of which fact the King was aware. The visitor had regarded the visit with trepidation, and when the investing ceremony was over he found himself tongue-tied with nervousness and emotion. Whereupon, said the report, the King took his arm in the most friendly fashion, and led him to a more intimate room with the remark: "Come along Sir James, let us talk of cabinet-making—not my sort, but your's." And they did.

"Alone on the terrible height!" exclaimed Tennyson, after a conversation with Queen Victoria. King George occupied that same terrible height, and he sustained the spectacular duties and individual responsibilities of that eminence with simple dignity and admirable correctness. But he knew the way down, and the actions that won for him the warm affection of a race which does not give its affection readily, was achieved on that plane where one touch of nature and human understanding make the whole world kin.

#### VINT TO INDIA

King George has unique distinction among British sovereigns of having visited India twice—once as Prince of Wales in 1905-06—when he laid the foundation stone of the Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta—and again as King-Emperor, when his coronation was celebrated at the never-to-be-forgotten Delhi Durbar of 1911.

Both these visits were made, so to say, before the Flood—before the catastrophe of the Great War and the profound changes in the social and political atmosphere which have resulted from the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

It is difficult to realize the comparative tranquillity which prevailed in India, especially at a time of the first visit. Discontent was practically non-existent. Political agitation had not advanced beyond the mildest constitutional methods, and this despite the fact that the partition of Bengal had produced an excitement greater than had been witnessed since the Ilbert Bill. „Boycott, it is true, had been born.....

#### FIRST CALCUTTA VISIT

Elaborate precautions were of course taken in 1905-06 for the protection of Their Royal Highnesses all over India, but, like other members of the Royal Family the Prince (as he then was) and even the Princess (now Queen Mary) defied the police measures and came into close contact with their subjects. This was actually the case in 1912, when a brilliant Pageant was staged on the Calcutta Maidan in honour of Their Imperial Majesties. There was an enormous concourse numbering any thing up to 500,000 people ; and after the Pageant the Royal carriage moved off as if to return to Government House.

To the general consternation, however, it suddenly turned and made the entire circuit of the amphitheatre, driving along the edge of the cheering crowds. This unrehearsed effect was Their Majesties' own idea, and it made a marked impression on public opinion, which had been violently stirred by the transfer of the capital to Delhi and by the sudden rearrangement of provinces announced in connexion with that change. The spectre of anarchist outrages had also been present for several years, and there was a real concern for Their Majesties on this account.

The excitement created in Bengal by the Imperial visit in 1911-12 was extraordinary. At least a million people from the districts flocked into Calcutta—some of them the poorest and most ignorant of their kind—all eager to obtain *Darshan*—that is, a glimpse of the face of the *Badshah* (Emperor)—for they believed that it would wipe away the sins of a life-time. The writer recollects talking to a poor old woman on the Maidan who had come to Calcutta from a great distance for this purpose, and was waiting to see Their Majesties when they came out from the service at the Cathedral.

#### GREAT DELHI DARBAR

The great Darbar at Delhi was an unforgettable experience. For nearly a month at least two million people were encamped in and round the Ridge, and every day there were feasts, tournaments and other *tamashas* leading up to and away from the great Darbar. The Darbar itself was a gorgeous spectacle, which has been recorded by pen and brush in a thousand descriptions. Its most sensational feature was the unexpected announcement that the capital was to be changed from Calcutta to Delhi—a surprise which had been prepared in secret by Lord Hardinge and Lord Crewe and was now thrust into the mouth of His Majesty. It was a masterpiece of diplomacy for the change having been announced by the King-Emperor in person there could be no undoing it. But the indignation and excitement which it aroused increased the anxieties of those responsible for Their Majesties' safety. How necessary were the precautions taken at Delhi in 1911, was proved a year later, when Lord Hardinge himself was bombed and nearly killed while riding up the Gandhi Chowk on an elephant during what was intended to be his first triumphant entry into the new capital.

King George, it may be mentioned, made his entry on horseback and surrounded by such a crowd of generals that it was a little difficult to pick out His Majesty from the red-coated horse-men surrounding him.

While both the King and Queen enjoyed their visits to the great centres, there can be no doubt that King George's happiest hours in India were spent in the jungles of Nepal, where he shot tiger and lived the simple life of the hunter for a fortnight. The select party which accompanied the King found him delightful company and said his reputation as a marksmen was well sustained.

In an article on political development in India during the late King's reign, the *Times* points out that in another way the Darbar was pregnant with meaning.

When King George returned from his earlier visit to India, he had laid great stress on the need of approaching Indian problems with sympathy and understanding. How seriously he had meant those words was emphasized by the announcement of 1911. The men of the Indian Army became eligible for the most highly

prized of all military decorations. Large grants were to be made for the promotion of popular education. Above all the capital of British India was to be transferred from Calcutta, emphatically the creation of British blood and energy, to the most famous of all the capitals of India—to Delhi, the city of Indian Imperial tradition.

Navy missed at the time the true significance of the decision; but even after event has since driven it home. It meant the coming transformation of that all-British Government which had dominated India for over a century, which had recognized the administration, which had suppressed internal wars, which had secured the highways for unarmed travellers, and which, by the precept of education and the example of high ideals, had breathed new spirit into a great country, exhausted, impoverished, and demoralised by the collapse of its Government and the conflicts of its peoples.

The development of the ideas implicit in his Majesty's announcements at Delhi forms the outstanding feature of the King's reign in India. It is needless to recite the details of the measures taken all those years ago, or of those since taken. But the multiplication of Indians in the Services, the progressive limitation of the numbers of Englishmen recruited, the formation of exclusively Indian military units, the revival of the old Indian Marins under the proud title of the Royal Indian Navy and the creation of an Indian Flying Corps are all striking evidences of the changed attitude, while the recognition on all hands of Dominion status as the goal of British statesmanship makes the King-Emperor's reign the most remarkable period of Indian political history.

While on the political side the developments of the last quarter of a century have been of outstanding importance, the physical memorials are no less striking. Foremost among them must always be reckoned the creation of the new capital. Not very long ago the visitor would have regarded Delhi as a city belonging together to the past. Perhaps no spot on earth has been more often soaked in blood, or offers more reminders of the vanity of riches and the transience of power.

Of Mogul might there remain one splendid and many deserted tombs; of past magnificence of the only living emblems are the golden-crested hoopoes playing on the lawns of the palace. But all the old cities of Delhi grew up under the shadow and protection of fortresses. The new one lies open to the world, cunningly planned, a superb monument to the power which an unnumbered multitude of Indians helped to establish, and which they would not willingly see fall. Here at all events is an answer to those critics who used to complain that the memorials of British rule in India were utilitarian only, for the New Delhi is an unquestioned work of genius.

And yet ought we have been ashamed if our memorials had after all been merely useful? Dalhousie planning the first railways of India and laying out its lines of telegraphs, was accomplishing work of which the greatness, as measured by results, we can still hardly estimate. Nothing more closely affects the lives of men and the nature of society than the ease with which persons can move from place to place and make contact with others. Despite the cultural unity of ancient India, its distances most effectively prevented the development of economic or political union. In that sense Dalhousie was more truly the founder of Indian nationalism than any other individual. The influences which he brought to bear have in our own days become yet more intensively powerful. To the railway succeeds the aeroplane, and the telegraph is supplemented by wireless broadcast.

The consequences of developing communications are both moral and economic. But in the narrower economic sphere results of the first importance have been achieved. The development of means by which natural forces may be harnessed in the service of man has made great strides in the last quarter of a century, and in India progress has been relatively enormous. The extension of the use of electric light and power, with improvement in the conditions of factory work and reduction of both the effort and danger of mining, has meant much. Twenty-five years ago electricity was new in India; to-day it lights and cools all the larger centres. The disappearance of the inconvenient, ineffective, and dangerous oil-lamp, the advantage of the electric fan over the tired and sleepy punkah-coolie, the ease with which air-conditioning plants can be installed and operated, all have tended powerfully to relieve the strain and temper the influence of an enervating climate. Over large regions, too, hydro-electric schemes have been, or are being, brought to fruition. The Tata hydro-electric scheme in Western India and the other great hydro-electric scheme which has done much to transform a wide tract of Northern India are outstanding memorials of this development.

In all these ways, and many more the influence and ideas of the Western world have been pressing hard on the ancient land of India. Even when all allowance has been made for that perspective time which exaggerates the extent of the changes which a man has personally witnessed, India has changed more rapidly and more greatly than even during the 63 years of the reign of Queen Victoria. The truth seems to be that for a long time the results of a continuing movement are slow and small. It attacks the fringes, it affects individuals but it seems to leave the great mass inert and unaltered. So it has been in India. There until the close of the nineteenth century it was possible to believe the Western influence while evident in the cities, had not actually touched those endless plains of villages and fields which form the real India. The good, in fact, had only reached the top of the band and here and there begun to slip over, carrying with it a few grains of earth. That was the state of affairs when King George ascended the throne. Since then the bond of long established custom has been breached. The result in a way has been a period of stress confusion, and uncertainty. But it has been marked throughout by the pressure of one consistent policy. The King, his Ministers, his Viceroy, and his people have desired and sought to modernize India.

#### BRITAIN'S ENTRY INTO THE WAR

Of the causes of Great Britain's entry into the Great War—which is likely to remain incomparably the most historic event of the reign of King George the Fifth, much has been written. The diplomatic documents relating to British intervention are voluminous, and the comments of contemporary writers would of themselves make a library.

But no one has given a better summing-up of the situation in which Great Britain found herself, and the mood in which the nation assented to war, than did the King himself a few days after the fateful fourth of August. His Majesty had been talking earnestly with the American Ambassador, Walter Hines Page, for half-an-hour, explaining the events that led up to the war when, according to Page's own account, the King threw up his hands and explained: "My God, Mr. Page, what else could we do?" Such, in less concise form, is likely to be the historian's verdict on Britain's entry into the European War of 1914-1918.

During the days immediately preceding the war the King collaborated closely with his Ministers in their desperate efforts to avert the catastrophe. From the 28th July, Lord Oxford's biographers tell us, the Prime Minister was in "constant oral communication with the King." This process involved consultations at all hours, and, as has been related, necessitated a call upon the King in the middle of the night. The business that brought him from his bed was a German complaint that Russia, by mobilizing, was forcing war on Europe; and with the Prime Minister the King arranged for a personal appeal to be telegraphed from himself to the Tsar to "remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred.

"If," said the King to the Tsar, "I can in any way contribute to that all-important purpose (peace), I will do everything in my power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations."

By that time, however, the die was cast. Perhaps neither Russia nor Germany could regain control of the forces that they had unleashed; perhaps those who governed Germany had determined upon war and had no intention of being deflected from the great gamble upon which clearly their minds had been concentrated for many years. Whatever might be the prospect which were presented to them, King George's view of it was not concealed. He described it as a "terrible calamity, the evil of which could not be remedied."

But once the decision was taken His Majesty had, of necessity, to fill his role as the head of the armed forces. Not for him the old monarchical privilege of leading his armies in the field; nor yet to step aboard a flagship as the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet. Such spectacular roles are now constitutionally forbidden to the Sovereign.

Even for the restricted part permitted to him, the King was not, in one respect, well-equipped. Though highly-trained as a sailor, His Majesty had never served professionally as a soldier. So little is the British sovereign regarded as a War Lord that King George had never been given the military rank which was essential to his position as head of the Army. Thus, on his accession, he was obliged to contemplate the farcical situation of promoting himself to the rank of Field-Marshal and of presenting himself with the baton. His senior military officers, however,

relieved him of the dilemma. A number of Field-M Marshals sought audience of him and petitioned him to take the rank.

Thereafter His Majesty lost no opportunity of extending his knowledge of the army, and inspections, reviews and manoeuvres found in him an eager student of the practical side of soldiering. On one occasion, in 1912, the King remained with his generals to the end of some manoeuvres near Cambridge and then attended the conference which it was customary to hold to discuss the lessons of such exercises. As head of the Army the king took the chair at the conference, and listened to the debate, which was opened by Sir Douglas Haig.

A few days after the declaration of war, the King visited Aldershot to bid farewell to the divisions stationed there, a considerable proportion of the "Contemptible Little Army." On the parade ground where those superbly disciplined and highly trained men marched past for the last time on British soil, the King was on several subsequent occasions to see, springing into life and into military effectiveness, that army millions which was created by Kitchener.

Few men saw so much of the making of that army as did His Majesty. His visit to training camps were innumerable, and he saw the hardships of those early volunteers in something like their harsh realities. It was impossible to conjure uniforms and equipment out of the air, and the King more than once inspected soldiers dressed in the manner in which they had gone to enlist. Their clothes bore testimony to the way in which men of all classes and conditions had responded to the call to arms. Men in shabby piebald suits, with mufflers round their necks, side by side with young gentlemen whose Savile Row trousers still retained a suggestion of a crease and with straw-hatted clerks who were soon to show that courage and endurance are not the monopolies of any grade or class.

There is evidence in his speeches later in the war that the King never forgot the realities that lay behind the uniform, not only the uniform of khaki, but also of those suits of bright blue which were the costume of wounded men who were not bedridden.

With the creator of this, the greatest army that Great Britain had ever put in the field, the King had long been acquainted. They had met in various places—in south Africa towards the close of the South African War, and on Egyptian soil—and at the King's command Kitchener came from the East to take charge of the troops at the Coronation.

On Kitchener's appointment as Secretary of State for War, the King gave the Field Marshal the use of York House which was, indeed, Kitchener's last home, for from there he set out to meet his doom in the icy waters off the Orkneys. During his anxious tenure of the war Office, Kitchener was frequently at Buckingham Palace, not always for formal audiences as a Minister, but sometimes, late in the evening, when the "weary Titan" found relaxation and understanding friendship in the King's study.

Though the King was not permitted to lead his soldiers in the field, he soon discovered that there was no reason why he should not pay visits to them, and so in December 1914, when conditions were far from being congenial, His Majesty paid his first visit to the Western front, "to gain," as he said in a message to his men, "a slight experience of the life you are leading." Thus, for the first time in 170 years, a King of England joined his army on the fields of France. Five times, in all, he repeated that experience, and though naturally the generals took such steps as they could to ensure that the enemy did not have the satisfaction of killing the King, his desire to see certain battle fronts took him under shell fire on more than one occasion, while the risk of aerial bombardment was ever present. The last Royal head to be anointed in the Abbey Church of Westminster knows the feel of a steel helmet, sworn under conditions that made it a necessity.

The King knows also what it is to be loaded into an ordinary military ambulance as a casualty and to be driven in pain over the wartime roads of Northern France. His Majesty had been inspecting some airmen and was mounted on the horse of a distinguished general. Cynics might find material for comment in the fact of a general's horse being unaccustomed to the sound of hearty cheers, but it is undeniable that the animal, on hearing the rousing acclamation of the soldiers, reared three times. The King sat the horse perfectly during two of these jolts, but the third was exceptionally violent, with the result that his Majesty was thrown, and sustained injuries which necessitated his transfer to England on a stretcher and an absence from public duties for some weeks.

## JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS IN INDIA

There were amazing scenes in Calcutta on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations. It seemed that the whole of Calcutta's million and a quarter population had turned out, and that every private car, taxi, bus, gharry and rickshaw was in commission.

Main roads, particularly those running in the vicinity of the large number of brilliantly illuminated buildings, were blocked from kerb to kerb with vehicular traffic, and pavements were no less congested with pedestrians.

The following message from His Excellency Sir John Anderson to the school children of Bengal was read in almost every school in the province to-day:

"I invite Young Bengal to study the life of His Majesty and to strive to emulate the example he has set in his subjects."

The Governor pointed out that the King's life is one "characterized by qualities which are indeed kingly: unselfish devotion to duty; service to others, courage which has supported him through trials well-nigh unupportable and has flowed from him to inspire his people the bearing of greatness with modesty and simplicity."

In Calcutta the celebrations began in the morning when thousands of poor people were fed on the maidan.

Seldom has St. Paul's Cathedral accommodated such a large congregation as that which attended the Thanks-giving Service held there the previous morning.

His Excellency the Governor of Bengal in full uniform, Ministers and Members of His Excellency's Executive Council, the Chief Justice of Bengal, Judges of the High Court, military officers representing various units, the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, and prominent members of almost every community in Calcutta were present.

Owing to the great demand for accommodation the Cathedral had to be entirely re-seated, but even so, half-an-hour before the service began the body of the church, the aisles and even the gallery were fully occupied.

Under the command of Lt.-Col. C. H. Gotta, 100 officers and men of the 1st Battalion, Devonshire Regiment, attended the service. There were also present detachments from St. John's Ambulance Association and the Nursing Divisions, and troops of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.

His Excellency the Governor, accompanied by his staff, also attended a special Thanksgiving Service at St. Andrew's Church, conducted by the Rev. W. S. Urquhart, Principal, Scottish Churches College, the Rev. John Wood of Wellesley Square Church and the Rev. R. E. Lee, Presidency Senior Chaplain and Moderator of the Presbytery of Bengal who delivered the address.

A special Thanksgiving Parade Service was held in the Garrison Church of St. Patrick, Fort William. Pontifical High Mass was by the Rt. Rev. Mgr. J. Fernandes, Administrator of the Archdiocese assisted by the Rev. J. Weaver, S. J., and S. Gomes, S. J. After the Gospel of the Mass the Rev. J. Weaver delivered an address.

Thanksgiving services were held in all the other Calcutta Churches and at the leading temples and mosques.

All over India the same generous demonstration of the people's affection was made apparent in whole-hearted participation in the Jubilee celebrations.

At Simla His Excellency the Viceroy and the Countess of Willingdon drove in state to the Cathedral, the streets of the Summer Capital presenting a gaily decorated appearance and the scene at night, when a million lights twinkled in an artistic scheme of illuminations, beggars description.

At Bombay, too, as also in Madras, the people's joyous tribute of affectionate loyalty was everywhere apparent. Lord Brabourne, the Governor of Bombay, was present in the Capital of the Presidency, but Lord Erskine, Governor of Madras, was in Ootacamund, the summer headquarters where the Jubilee celebrations added to Nilgiri's seasonal gaiety.

In the Indian States the Jubilee was celebrated with equal loyalty and devotion.

Traditional splendour marked the festivities in Mysore, Travancore, Cochin, Hyderabad, the Punjab and Kathiwar States, Kashmir, and the Eastern Agency.

The following was the text of the Viceroy's broadcast Silver Jubilee message: "On behalf of the Princes and the people of India I beg to send to His Majesty the King-Emperor our respectful and joyful greetings on this auspicious day and express our profound hope that he may be spared for many years to continue to rule this great country. Loyalty to the King-Emperor has always been the abiding faith of the Indian people and while it is impossible in these days of change and development to expect that many millions in India will be free from all the stress and strain which

comes with the desire for political advancement, His Majesty can rest assured that his hold will be above and apart from such movements and that we are all devotedly loyal to the King-Emperor's Throne and person.

"We gratefully thank him for the constant and abiding interest that he has always taken in the welfare, prosperity and progress of all his subjects in India.

"When we who live in India look back on these 25 years, we can put aside all our temporary disputes and differences and agree that the close association of our two races has brought immense advance and development in all branches of our public life, with a higher standard of comfort and prosperity, for all classes and communities in this country.

"Never has the devotion and loyalty of the Princes and the people of India to their Sovereign been shown to greater advantage than during the four years of the Great War, when they shared to the full all the terrible sacrifices made to secure the safety and security of the Empire, and so to-day in the privileged position which I hold as His Majesty's personal representative in India I ask all my fellow-citizens who proudly claim his as their ruler to join with me in gratefully thanking His Majesty for the splendid example of courage and fortitude he has always shown to us in guiding the destinies of our Empire in the past, in assuring him of our loyalty and devotion and in sending up a prayer to Providence that he may long be spared to reign over us."

Their Majesties' Silver Jubilee Fund met with a generous response in India and on September 16, the following telegrams were exchanged between Their Exoellencies and the King-Emperor.

From Lord and Lady Willingdon : "We are indeed happy to inform Your Majesties that Your Majestys' Silver Jubilee Fund in India which closed yesterday, reached the splendid figure of just over £1,000,000 thus ensuring that Your Majesty's Silver Jubilee will live in the memory of your Indian subjects by extended and improved means of medical relief which that great occasion has enabled them to be provided with."

From the King-Emperor : "The Queen and I are delighted to hear of the magnificent response to the Silver Jubilee Fund in India by which the medical resources of the country will so greatly benefit. We heartily congratulate you on the splendid success of your efforts."

In a broadcast message to his farflung Empire His Majesty said :

"I dedicate myself to your service for the years that may be given to me. I look back on the past with thankfulness to God. My people and I have gone through great trials and difficulties together and they are not yet over. In the midst of this day's rejoicings I grieve that numbers of my people are still without work. We ought to think of them and also of those who are suffering from any form of disablement, of the sympathy and help that we can give them."

# Lord Linlithgow's Broadcast Speech

His Excellency, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy broadcasted the following address on April 18 on the assumption of his office :—

A few moments ago you listened to a brief but profoundly significant ceremony when you heard me take the oaths of allegiance and of office. Now speaking to you in your homes with those you love about you, I wish you to know that as I promised my true allegiance to his Majesty and dedicated myself to the service of India I was conscious that I spoke not only for myself but also for you all. By the eager manifestations of your loyalty to the throne and person of the King-Emperor forthcoming last year at the jubilee of his late Majesty King George V and by your grief and sympathy in the sad hour of his late Majesty's demise you have given fresh proof of your constant devotion to the imperial throne. I am confident too that everyone of you will wish on this solemn occasion with me to pledge yourselves anew to the service of your motherland and of your fellow men.

## LAW AND ORDER

You know well the heavy responsibility that rests upon the Viceroy—a responsibility which has been discharged with such signal success over a long period of years by the illustrious public servant whom I have the honour to follow in that great office. Amongst the manifold duties of the Viceroy none is more vital than that for the maintenance of peace and good order throughout India. Believe me, my friends, that I can do no greater service than by the vigilant and effective discharge of this duty. The long story of progress and political evolution throughout the world proves beyond all question that of all the factors that may make for retrogression and reaction none is more powerful than civil disorder to inflict irreparable hurt upon the body politic. This and all other duties and responsibilities laid upon me by law and by the Instrument of Instructions which the King-Emperor has been graciously pleased to bestow upon me, I will discharge without fear or favour, affection or ill-will including that to do right to all manner of people after the laws and usages of India.

## PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF BRITISH INDIA

Most of you know that I am no stranger to this lovely land and to its kindly peoples. During the tour of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India I saw not only a great part of the countryside in many provinces but also many of your cities and towns and met not a few persons whose kindness to me I can never forget and whose friendship I greatly value.

## THE INDIAN STATES

The terms of our appointment upon that commission confined the scope of our enquiry to British India. I did not have the pleasure except during the brief period of a holiday of visiting the territories of any Indian rulers. This omission, I hope, by the kindness of their Highnesses to repair at an early date. Let me at once assure you that I have ever in mind that the constant and devoted loyalty to his Majesty the King-Emperor of the princes and people of the Indian States and here affirm my profound admiration for their proud record of constant and undeviating service to the throne and empire both in peace and war.

To the services of the Crown in India, I give my greeting.

## ROYAL INDIAN NAVY

The Royal Indian Navy, young in years, yet the heir of ancient and glorious traditions of service at sea will, I am confident, vie in loyalty and efficiency with the other armed forces of the Crown in India. As one who has occupied the office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty, I can claim some familiarity with naval matters. My hope is that during my viceroyalty I may find it possible to witness in person something of the life and work of the service.

## ARMY IN INDIA AND THE R. A. F.

To the army in India and the Royal Air Force I speak as one who in his time has shared their life both in peace and in war and whose happiest days have been



spent with the colours. I recall with pride and pleasure that in northern France in 1915 I witnessed the loyalty, discipline and valour of units of the Indian army. Of the decorations that His Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer upon me there is none that I prize more highly than the long service medal of that branch of the army in which I had the honour to serve. Of my own knowledge then I can vouch for your loyalty to the throne and person of the Sovereign and to your devotion to duty. I look forward with keen pleasure to those occasions upon which I shall be with you, whether on the parade ground or during field training.

#### INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE

The fame of the Indian Civil Service is acknowledged throughout the British Empire and beyond. I look to the members of that service throughout India to give me during my viceroyalty the help and support that they have been wont at all times to extend to my predecessors. The glorious traditions of your service require that you should give to the people of India, whose servants you are, the best that is in you to the limits of your strength. I have every confidence that you will do no less than this in the difficult years to come. Some among you there may be who have felt honest doubts as to this or that element in the plan of constitutional reform which Parliament last year approved. Now that this matter is no longer in issue and the new constitution is upon the statute book I call upon you to banish doubt and to eschew half-heartedness and with me and the Governors of your provinces to go forward in faith and courage to put into effect and to make to work this body of reforms which with your help has been shaped by the joint wisdom of Britain and India after labours which for care and scope have in matters of the kind no parallel in the history of the world.

#### THE DISTRICT OFFICER

Let me add this word to those of you occupying the immensely responsible position of district officer. Be sure that I will bear constantly in mind the vital import of your work as the senior representative of the Crown in your district. You constitute the essential link between Government and the rural population. The cultivators of India look to you for guidance, help and comfort. I am well aware that you do your utmost to serve them. I appreciate the extent to which in recent times and in growing degree the ever rising tide of office work has hampered you in the performance of your first and foremost duty—that of maintaining yourselves in close personal touch with your villages. It is a question as to which I propose to take an early opportunity to consult Governors of provinces and my advisers whether means cannot be discovered whereby you may be relieved at least in the touring season of some part of your desk work and thereby be given the opportunity (of which I am certain you would eagerly avail yourselves) to devote more of your time to touring. But in any event I censure you, whatever the difficulties, to strive your utmost to know your villages. It is true that contemporary standards and traditions of administrations must inevitably lay upon you more desk work than your predecessors were accustomed to perform. Remember nevertheless that the traditions of your service and its greatest glory have their origin in the camps of your predecessors. For you in your own generation it remains abundantly true that the *tent* is mightier than the pen.

#### REMAINING CIVIL SERVICES OF CROWN

All India I am sure desire, as I do, that during the forthcoming period of constitutional change there may be no stay in these beneficent activities of Government in India designed to ameliorate the lot of the people. Knowing them as well as I do and having indeed worked with not a few, I am sure that I may count implicitly upon the members, whatever their standing, of all those other civil services of the Crown, in India, which through so long a period have in their various capacities helped to sustain the burden of Government, resolutely to perform the duties with which they are severally charged. You may count upon me to support your labours. I know well the difficulties which in certain fields confront you and the trials and disappointment which inevitably you are called upon to bear. I am confident too that I speak for you all when I say that those difficulties exist not to deter you but to be boldly and cheerfully faced and as soon as may be overcome.

#### THE POLICE

Of all those who serve the public none perform more invaluable services, than do the police, the friends and guardians of all persons who are concerned within the law

of the land to proceed upon their lawful occasions. You may be sure that in the performance of your arduous duties, sometimes difficult, at moments dangerous and always delicate, you may count upon my steadfast support.

If I am aware of the hard times which farmers have had to face I have also in mind the difficulties through which industrialists and the urban populations have passed during the period of world-wide depression. Indeed engaged as I myself have been in commerce and finance, I am able to extend to them my understanding sympathy but great and real as may have been those difficulties, to those of you engaged in any capacity in commerce, finance and industry, I would say that you can at this time render no greater service to your country than by going quietly, yet confidently, about your business.

I know too that the difficulty of finding employment, particularly, in the case of young men of education has saddened and embittered many youthful lives. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than that, after due consideration and enquiry, I may find it to be within my power in some degree to mitigate this cruel burden of quite undeserved hardship.

Amongst those responsibilities in Great Britain that I had perforce to forego when I undertook my present charge were the chairmanships of the Medical Research Council, of the Privy Council and of the governing body of the Imperial College of Science and Technology. I hope greatly, that I may find the means during my viceroyalty to forward in India the cause of medicine and of all other branches of science and technology.

It will be in keeping with the experience in many countries and in many ages, if it should emerge, that the present phase of intense political activity is to be followed by a quickening of the creative impulse in the field of indigenous art and literature, nothing could give me higher satisfaction than that I should be privileged to foster and encourage a movement of that nature.

Now, let me say a word or two as one who has ever experienced the greatest happiness from his relations with his own family to those young people who may hear me to-day. Children, I speak to you, as your King Emperor's Viceroy and as your friend. Remember that when you grow up it will be with you that the honour of your country will rest. Remember that no man or woman can be a good citizen and a true patriot who does not, first of all, learn and govern and subdue his own nature. That is never easy but take to heart of grace and believe me that if you try hard and long to be good you will in the end succeed. I shall very often think of you to fear God, honour the King Emperor and obey your parents.

I turn now to a matter of the highest importance. I would have you know that I am incapable of preferring any one community before another. Let me bring home to you my inflexible resolution in this matter by a homely illustration. God has indeed been good to me for He has given me five children. They came into the world each one with a nature and with characteristics different from their brothers and sisters. I have tried my utmost to understand those differences and to deal with each one of my children in a fashion appropriate to his or her nature, to give support where support has seemed to me to be needed and in each to cultivate the natural gifts and good qualities. I have sought too to encourage them at all times to be tolerant of each other. I love them all most dearly but among my children I have no favourites.

#### PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

In a few months you may expect to see inaugurated the system of provincial autonomy laid down in the Government of India Act of 1935. Thus, as you are aware, will mark the first stage towards the completion of that constitutional structure whose natural crown and summit will be the All India Federation as now prescribed in the same statute. The consummation of constitutional changes so profound cannot, in the nature of things, be simple of achievement. The success of this signal endeavour rests very largely with you and must, in a great degree, depend upon your steadiness and forbearance. It will be my duty throughout this anxious period to tender to you such counsel as may seem to me to be within my proper function and to be calculated to assist you in discharging the responsibilities of citizenship under representative government. In no circumstances can it be for me to advise you how to vote, for it is of the very essence of this system of Government that in that matter you should decide of your own individual and unfettered judgment where it is that your duty lies. Therefore the leaders of

political parties, by whatever name they are known, competing within the ambit of the constitution for the suffrage of the provincial electorates, may rely implicitly upon me, never wittingly to use language calculated to prejudice their lawful interests.

It is quite true that at the centre, as at present constituted, my Government finds itself opposed from time to time by substantial elements in the central legislatures. The conditions of that opposition and the fact that in no circumstances can those who compose such opposition be called upon by me to form part of an alternative Government constitute in my considered view, as indeed they did in the opinion of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament which considered the Reforms, the best of all reasons for the constitutional changes at the centre adumbrated in the recent Act of Parliament. Meantime let me only say that in my judgment the appropriate forum for the exposition and where necessary the defence of Government policy is upon the floor of the legislatures. The circumstances then (and I speak to you as I intend always to do with the utmost frankness) which must exist upon the inauguration of provincial autonomy and before the setting up of the Federation will inevitably lay upon me to inconsiderable difficulty. You may rest assured that my constant endeavour throughout the period shortly to be entered upon will be to contribute to the best of my opportunities towards the successful working of self-Government in the provinces and at the same time to prepare the way for the changes at the centre implicit in the setting up of an All India Federation.

The successful working of representative government, particularly in the formative period shortly to be entered upon, requires amongst other things that I should as far as practicable be in touch with the leaders of all political parties as well as with the trend of opinion in the electorates. It is highly important that you should understand plainly that when I grant an interview to the leader or leaders of this or that political party, this in no way signifies that I favour such leaders of their parties. The rule and convention is well understood in Great Britain as between the Crown and political leaders in that country. Its general acceptance in India is in my judgment essential to the successful working in this country of representative self-Government.

It is within the power of the press of all democratic countries to make the most material contribution towards the successful working of public institutions and the development of an informed and responsible body of opinion. But like the rest of us newspaper men cannot be expected to make bricks without straw. If they are to discharge their responsible duties towards the public and to comment effectively upon current affairs, they require, whatever their editorial policy, to be informed as far as practicable upon the facts at issue. As one well accustomed to their requirements in this regard I intend to do my utmost to give them such assistance as properly I may and both they and their readers may rest assured that such help as my officers may find it possible to give to the press will be confined to facts, that these will be presented in a fashion entirely objective and that the material available will be at the disposal of the press as a whole without distinction or discrimination.

It has occurred to me that there may be those amongst you who may wish to hear in the Hindustani language the words which I have spoken to you to-day. I have therefore given my instructions that a full and exact translation into Hindustani of my speech is to be broadcast immediately I have finished speaking.

In conclusion, let me say to you that of all those conditions which in great endeavours make for a happy and successful issue none is more essential than that those who participate in them should both trust and respect each other. All men are liable to error. I do not ask or expect that all of you will at all times find yourselves in agreement with me. Nevertheless you may be sure that I shall never doubt your sincerity or the integrity of your minds. I ask no more than that you should favour me with the same whole-hearted trust that I have promised to extend to you for the next five years without let or stay. I will devote my mind, my heart and such health as Providence may vouchsafe to me to the service of your country. For this I ask you to remember me in your prayers. Let us move boldly forward with faith and courage, you I, and with all our strength strive to better the lot of her peoples whosoever they may be and to sustain in all its ancient fame and glory the great name of India over all the world.

**Proceedings of the**  
**COUNCIL OF STATE**  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**and**  
**PROVINCIAL COUNCILS**  
**JANUARY—JUNE 1936**

# The Council of State

## LIST OF MEMBERS

**President :—**THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI  
BYRAMJI DADABHOY

### Nominated—Officials (11)

1. HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL SIR  
ROBERT CARSELS
2. THE HON'BLE KUNWAR SIR JAGADISH  
PRASAD
3. THE HON'BLE MR. T. A. STEWART,
4. THE HON'BLE SIR BERTRAND GLANCY
5. THE HON'BLE MR. M. G. HALLETT
6. THE HON'BLE SIR GUTHRIE RUSSELL
7. THE HON'BLE MR. A. DE C.  
WILLIAMS
8. THE HON'BLE MR. A. J. RAINMAN
9. THE HON'BLE MR. A. G. CLOW
10. THE HON'BLE MR. J. N. G. JOHNSON
11. THE HON'BLE MR. E. F. THOMAS

### From Bazar

THE HON'BLE MR. GANESH SRIKRISHNA  
KHAIRADE

### Non-Officials (14)

1. THE HON'BLE SIR DAVID  
DEVADORS,
2. THE HON'BLE DIWAN BAHADUR  
SIR K. RAMUNI MENON
3. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
DR. SIR N. CHOKSY
4. THE HON'BLE SIR JORNA GHOSAL
5. THE HON'BLE PRINCE AFSAR-UL-MULK
6. THE HON'BLE MR. BIJAY KUMAR  
BASU
7. THE HON'BLE MAHARAJA JAGADISH  
NATH RAY, OF DINAJPUR
8. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
SHEIKH MAKBUL HOSAIN
9. THE HON'BLE SAYYID ISHRAF HUSAIN
10. THE HON'BLE RAJA CHARANJIT SINGH
11. THE HON'BLE NAWAB MALIK  
SIR MOHAMMAD HAYAT KHAN  
NOON KT.
12. THE HON'BLE MAHARAJADHIRAJA  
SIR KAMESHWAR SINGH,
13. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
SHAMS-UD-DIN HAIDAR,
14. THE HON'BLE LIEUT-COLONEL  
NAWAB SIR AKBAR KHAN

### Elected—Non-officials (33)

1. THE HON'BLE RAJAH SIR ANNAMALAI  
CHETTIAR,
2. THE HON'BLE MR. YARLAGADDA  
RANGANAYAKALU NAIDU

3. THE HON'BLE MR. V. C. VELLINGORE  
GOUNDER
4. THE HON'BLE SAYYAD MOHAMMED  
PADSHEA SHAHIS BAHADUR
5. THE HON'BLE SARDAR SHERI  
JAGANNATH MAHARAJ PANDIT
6. THE HON'BLE MR. SANTIDAS ASKURAN
7. THE HON'BLE SIR PERIDDER C.  
SETHNA
8. THE HON'BLE SUDAR SAKES SIR  
SULEMAN CARSUM HAJI MITRA
9. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
ALLI BUKSH MOHAMMED HUSAIN
10. THE HON'BLE MR. R. H. PARKER
11. THE HON'BLE MR. JAGADISH CHANDRA  
BANERJEE
12. THE HON'BLE KUMAR NRIPENORA  
NARAYAN SINHA, OF NASHIPUR
13. THE HON'BLE MR. SATTENDRA  
CHANDRA GHOSH MAULIK
14. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
SAID ABDUL HAFEEZ
15. THE HON'BLE MR. MAHMOOD  
SUHRAWARDY
16. THE HON'BLE SIR GEORGE  
CAMPBELL
17. THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR  
LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA
18. THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR  
LALA JAGADISH PRASAD
19. THE HON'BLE PANDIT PRAKASH  
NARAIN SAPRU
20. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
HAFFIZ MUHAMMAD HALIM
21. THE HON'BLE SHAIKH MUBSHIR  
HOSAIN KIDWAI
22. THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR  
LALA RAMNARAYAN DAS
23. THE HON'BLE SARDAR BUTA SINGH
24. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR  
NAWAB CHAUDHURI MUHAMMAD DIN
25. THE HON'BLE RAJA GHAZANFAR A  
KHAN
26. THE HON'BLE RAI BAHADUR  
RADHA KRISHNA JALAN
27. THE HON'BLE RAJA RAGHUNANDAN  
PRASAD SINGH
28. THE HON'BLE MR. HOSAIN IMAM
29. THE HON'BLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR
30. THE HON'BLE SRIJIT HERAMBA  
PRASAD BERAU
31. THE HON'BLE CAPTAIN MAUNG AYE
32. THE HON'BLE MR. W. T. MCINTYRE

# Proceedings of the Council

Budget Session—New Delhi—15th February to 28th April 1936

The winter session of the Council of State opened at New Delhi on the 15th February 1936 with *Sir Manasji Dadabhai* in the chair and adjourned after a brief session as a mark of respect to His late Majesty King George V.

## RAILWAY BUDGET DISCUSSION

**17th. & 20th. FEBRUARY :—**The main business to-day was the presentation of the Railway budget by *Sir Guthrie Russell* after which the Council adjourned till the 20th when the general discussion of the Railway Budget was held.

The hon. Mr. *Hussain Imam* speaking on the budget, struck a new ground with the suggestion that the interest paid on provident fund by commercially run railways should not be higher than on short-term Government loans. This only helped to fill the pockets of the employees and the speaker opined that by reducing the rate by one per cent there would be a saving of two crores which might help to wipe out the deficit at least of commercial lines. The hon. Mr. V. V. *Kalishkar* wanted locomotives to be built in India with state aid. The hon. K. B. *Chaudhri Mohamed Din* and the hon. K. B. *Syed Abdul Hafeez* claimed 25 per cent representation of Muslims in railways and a greater scrutiny of the evil of corruption. The hon. Mr. *Parker* welcomed the proposal to amend the Railway Act against ticketless travelling and urged severe punishment of the staff who indulged in bribery and fraud. He agreed that road competition should be placed on a fair basis. *Messrs. Bamesaran Das, Banerji, Sahrawardy, P. N. Sanyal, Poddar, Jagdish Prasad and Barua* further subjected the Railway Board to criticisms, to which *Sir Zafrullah Khan* elaborately replied in a speech which occupied over 75 minutes.

## PAYMENT OF WAGES BILL

**24th. FEBRUARY :—**The payment of Wages Bill was passed to-day by the Council of State, with the amendment of Mr. P. N. *Sanyal*, which provided that for concerted absence of 10 or more workers without due notice as required under the terms of contract and without reasonable cause, only maximum of 8 days' wages (and not 13 days as provided by the Lower House) may be deducted.

## REDUCTION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE

**26th FEBRUARY :—**By 31 votes to 17 the Council rejected to-day the resolution of *Lala Mathraprasad Mehrotra* urging that the relation of military expenditure to the average income in India should be the same as in the Dominions. *Lala Mathraprasad's* main argument was that, as a result of the recent agreement between Britain and Russia the bogey of a Russian menace had largely disappeared. The Government of India could, therefore, reconsider their policy regarding military expenditure with a view to reducing it substantially and thus reduce taxation and spend more on nation-building departments. The *Commander-in-Chief*, opposing, said: "Armament is the order of the day and His Majesty's Government in Britain and most of the Dominions are faced with the need for increases in strength". He pointed out that the effect of the resolution was that India's defence expenditure should be reduced from about forty-five crores to something in the neighbourhood of nine crores, from twenty-five per cent of her national income on defence expenditure, as now, to five per cent as in the Dominions.

The Council then adjourned till the 28th when the Budget was presented whereafter it adjourned till the 6th March.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

**6th MARCH :—**The Council held a general budget discussion to day. Twenty-two members participated. Opposition was launched by *Sir Phiroze Sethna* and the main criticism charged the Finance Member with under-estimating the budget and having offered no gesture of relief to the poor masses. Several members criticised the methods of carrying out of the rural uplift work with the help of Government grants. Mr. *Hussain Imam* accused the Government that most money was spent in

propaganda intended to woo the masses from the Congress. *Raja Chasanfer Ali* pointed out the fallacy of Government propagandists in urging the villagers to use mosquito nets with a view to ward off malaria when the people had not even a sheet of cloth to cover themselves against sun, rain and cold. *Lala Ram Saran Das* opined that the increased amenities provided by the radio and other luxuries increased the burden of the masses instead of relieving them of it. Several others criticised the unchecked export of gold and wished alteration in exchange ratio. The *Finance Member* replying said that it was better to under-estimate revenue than over-estimate it and then face disappointment. He opposed subsidising from revenues of the commercial department like posts and telegraphs as that would also lay the central Government's budget to a similar demand from the railways. Sir James Grigg opined that any embargo on gold would fall ultimately on the agriculturist who sold gold. Concluding, the Finance Member reiterated that he had done his best to frame the budget as circumstances required in view of the responsibilities of seeing that the provincial autonomy was given an undisturbed start next year. The Council then adjourned till 11.

#### DEFENCE OF INDIA

**11th. MARCH :—**Mr. P. N. Sapru urged the Government to-day to constitute a joint standing committee of the central legislature for consultation and advice on problems connected with defence in India. He explained that if given effect to the resolution would only apply to conditions before the Federation for after the Federation the army would become the sole charge of the Governor-General when three Indian and three British members' advice would be taken.

Sir Robert Cassels, the Commander-in-Chief, stoutly opposed the resolution and said that those who wished to advise the Government must first study the army matters on which Government had been endeavouring their best to give all the available information. Members had not availed themselves of opportunities hitherto offered and indulged in same uninformed criticisms. The responsibility of armed forces rested on the executive and there could be no question of the executive being automatically called upon to consult the standing committee of the legislature before taking such action as it might consider necessary in public interest. It must remain for the executive alone to decide whether consultation with the legislature in any particular case was either necessary or feasible.

The speeches of non-official members that followed expressed indignation on the tone and temper of the Commander-in-Chief's reply which they contended was most unsatisfactory. Mr. P. N. Sapru described Sir Robert Cassel's speech as die-hardish and warned that if the legislators were treated as untouchables in army matters they would have to revolt against the defence department and could not be responsive to the Government. The resolution was negatived by 19 to 27 votes. The Council adjourned till 13th.

#### Parsi Marriages & Divorce Bill

**13th. MARCH :—**The bill amending the law relating to marriage and divorce among Parsis unanimously reported upon by the joint committee of both the Houses had an easy passage in the Council to-day. Certain drafting amendments suggested by Sir David Devadas were accepted and one amendment moved by Sir N. Chocksy defining Parsees as Parsee Zoroastrians was passed. The Mover, Sir Phiroze Sethna, thanked the House.

#### REMOVAL OF SEX-DISQUALIFICATION

Similarly, Sir Ramnani K. Menon found an all-round support to his resolution for removing the sex-disqualification for election or nomination to the Council of State. Government Members remained neutral but other official members were given freedom to vote. Several speakers including Maung Aye, Mr. A. G. Clw (official), Pandit Prakash Narayan Sapru, Mr. Hossain Imam, and Sir David Devados joined in the support. The resolution was passed without a dissentient voice.

#### YOUTHS FOR MILITARY ACADEMY

**16th. MARCH :—**In the Council to-day Mr. V. V. Kalikar in moving a resolution urging the appointment of a committee to advise the Government to secure the requisite type of Indian youths for admission to the Military Academy, criticised the policy of discrimination between martial and non-martial classes, which was the main cause for the present dearth of competent youths offering themselves for admission into the Academy. He also thought that the present course of training

had proved very expensive, which Indian parents could not afford. If a committee were appointed these could be examined and, with enough propaganda in the country, the requisite youths would be forthcoming. He urged the Government to create feeder schools in those places where a University Training Corps did not exist and said that the Government should also assist and encourage private schools. Concluding, Mr. Kalikar pointed out that the present method of nominating the majority of the cadets of the Academy had created a heart-burning all over the country. On the Commander-in-Chief suggesting an informal conference, the resolution was withdrawn.

#### INDIANS IN FIJI

**18th. MARCH :—**The Council unanimously adopted to-day Pandit *P. N. Saprú's* resolution protesting against the Fijian Government's recommendation to substitute the nomination of three Indian members to the Fijí Legislature instead of election. All sections of the House, elected and nominated, the European group and the Government whole-heartedly supported the resolution, characterising the recommendation as a retrograde step. Sir *Jogadish Prasad* said that the Government had agreed with the Opposition that adoption of the system of nomination would not give effective representation to over eighty thousand Indians in Fiji and if such a course were adopted, it would remain a source of constant irritation and there would be serious repercussions here.

#### RELEASE OF DETENUEE

The House then rejected without division the recommendation of Rai Bahadur *Mathura Prasad Mehrotra* for the appointment of a judicial committee of three High Court Judges to examine the cases of all political prisoners now under detention and the release of those prisoners recommended by the committee.

Mr. *M. G. Hallett* opposing reiterated Sir Henry Craik's speech made in the Assembly on Friday as to the ease with which the evidence was tested before a person was detained and said the appointment of a judicial committee was expensive and unnecessary. In any case the question of release must rest with the Executive.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

**25th. MARCH :—**The Hon. Mr. *P. N. Saprú* moved to-day a resolution urging the Government of India to give effect to those recommendations which would relieve unemployment among the educated classes. Mr. Saprú reviewed the salient features of the report of the committee over which his father presided in the United Provinces and said that the problem of unemployment being essentially an economic one the Government of India could in the language of the Committee help and give relief by a coordinate effort from the centre. Firstly, the statistics regarding unemployment must be made up to-date and there should be also a survey of economic conditions throughout India as recommended by Professors Hobartson and Bowley. Efforts should be made to organize production, the Government of India, themselves undertaking the financing of bigger undertakings like locomotive manufacture, motor manufacturing, mercantile marine, etc., through loans at a time when money was cheap. An organization should be started which would act as a thinking centre of economic matters and on whose findings Government's policy could be evolved. The fiscal policy of the Central Government also needed an urgent revision as the policy of discriminating protection laid down 15 years ago, appeared not satisfying the needs of India at present, especially in view of world conditions with important quotas, protective duties, bounties, subsidies, depreciated currencies, etc. The tariff procedure must be simplified and, furthermore, the development of social service must form another part of the Government's efforts to relieve unemployment. Education must be reconstructed with a view to give it a practical bias and, lastly, the legal profession needed reconstitution eliminating the evil of touching.

Mr. *A. G. Chow*, secretary of the Industries department, agreed with the tragedy of the situation and with the menace to society which unemployment meant. The report of the Saprú committee was confined in the first instance to the problem as viewed in the United Provinces though several aspects of the problem were common throughout India. The report had been published only a few weeks ago. The Government of India proposed to study it sympathetically to take such action as was desirable on it, but on the understanding they did not commit themselves to accepting every one of the recommendations of the committee (Cheers.) The report



had suggested concerted action throughout India for an effective solution of the problem. But it had emphasized that the problem centred round the questions connected with education, agriculture and industries. All these subjects were provincial and transferred subjects. Still the Government of India had been playing increasing part in order to secure a coordinated development of these subjects. The agricultural Commission was followed by the establishment of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research whose work done in respect of sugar establishment was well known. There was also the Pusa Research Institute which had been transferred to Delhi. The Industrial Research Bureau had recently been established whose assistance would be available to secure the fullest possibilities of industrial development.

Regarding the glass industry, the Government of India had deputed one special officer to make a survey of glass factories. His investigation had not yet been completed, but there were indications that in the technical sphere there were distinct possibilities of giving substantial help to the industry. Indeed the Government of India felt sure that the giving of technical assistance to scattered industries would be more helpful to manufacturers than arising revenue by a tariff wall.

Proceeding, Mr. Clow deplored the impression that in mere industrialisation lay the solution. On the other hand, the Sapru Committee had rightly pointed out that the starting point of any effort to solve the problem was overhauling the system of education so as to make the educated youth a useful member of society. As one who attended the meetings of the Central Advisory Board Education Mr. Clow paid a tribute to the work of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru on it and said that the recommendations of the board has been forwarded to the provincial Governments for adoption. The difficulty there was one of finance. Mr. Hosain Imam had wanted inflation of currency. Mr. Clow maintained that it was another form of taxation. He reiterated Sir James Grigg's remarks on the subject of protection and said it was chimerical to suppose that by absolute protection India could solve her difficulties. Whatever the merits of protection, when it was viewed in relation to the question of employment the House should remember that if there was the possibility of creating employment in some cases there would be opposite effects in other cases. For as Sir James Grigg had pointed out to the Assembly unless India was prepared to import she could not export. Concluding, Mr. Clow said that there was not one single remedy for unemployment but several remedies to be adopted by all. Hence co-operation of all was needed and the Government of India welcomed the discussions.

Mr. *Prakash Narain Sapru* expressed satisfaction at the Government's attitude. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

#### FINANCE BILL DISCUSSION

**30th. MARCH:**—The Finance Bill in the certified form came up for consideration to-day. Mr. *A. J. Riazman*, moving consideration of the Bill, said, "it is a matter of regret that the Bill comes once more in a certified form, but the House is aware of the circumstances which have rendered this step inevitable. The amendment carried by the Assembly were such as to make it impossible to balance the budget and the acceptance of those amendments would have resulted in a serious financial situation."

Mr. *Hosain Imam* led the Opposition. He reminded the House that this was the third time that a certified measure came up before them during one year. The last two instances were the Finance Bill, 1935-36, and the Criminal Amendment Bill. What was the use of the Executive every time ignoring the wishes of the Legislature, giving a handle to those who did not believe in constitutional progress? It was far better to abolish the Legislatures than every time impose an Executive decree. Worse still was the fact that the Council could not make any amendment to a certified measure. And the Government admitted in the Assembly that there was no transfer of power in finance, and all these budget discussions were a farce. Continuing, Mr. *Hosain Imam* dwelt at length on the financial aspect of the question and protested against the gold drain. He thought there was no necessity for a Controller of Currency after the establishment of the Reserve Bank. While industrialists in foreign countries like England and France could not stand the drain of war debts to America, was it any wonder that they did not want to saddle India with increased external payments. As an advocate of the poor he asked for removal of the surcharge on salt.

*Raja Ghassewar Ali* strongly objected to the Government reducing the House into a dignified debating club. He had used the word "dignified" out of respect for the non-official President. Referring to the constitutional position of the certified

bill, the speaker asked what was the necessity of the motion for consideration and the Government would have been more in order if they had straightway asked for the passage of the measure instead of wasting the valuable time of the Legislature. The attitude of the Government in this respect was the most unreasonable, defiant and insulting and this had already alienated the sympathy of well-meaning moderate opinion in the country who were always ready to help the Government. The Government ought to change their policy radically if they wanted their support.

Mr. S. Asthana regretted that the Government had not accepted the half-anna postcard also elimination of surcharge on supertax altogether. He criticised the fiscal policy and said that there had been much discrimination and too little protection. Referring to the Ottawa Agreement he suggested a tripartite conference between India, England and Japan for an equitable settlement.

The Maharaja of Durbhanga regretted the emergency taxes which still existed and thought a half-hearted measure for rural uplift would never succeed. He disapproved of the rebuilding of Quetta out of revenue. Referring to the Sugar industry the Maharaja stressed that both central and provincial Governments should keep a close watch on the interest of the agriculturist. While urging extension of postal facilities in rural parts he hoped the Government would sympathetically consider the half-anna postcard.

Mr. P. N. Saprú spoke with full knowledge of the limitations of the present constitution, which owed its responsibility to the British Parliament and the executive which was irremovable. Even then, he felt the course adopted was not conducive to the growth of a heavy Parliamentary mentality in this country, and the procedure adopted violated the spirit of law, cherished great hopes of new Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, but the Government of India are not giving a fair start. Proceeding, Pandit Saprú quoted copious quotations of history to rebut Sir James Grigg's conclusion from ancient history that British raj was really beneficial to India. Pandit Saprú pointed out that there were chapters in history in the days of East India Company, which were happily forgotten, in the interest of both races, but he hardly anticipated that responsible spokesman of the Government, as the Finance Member, would have thought it fit to refer to such obsolete passages.

**31st MARCH :—**The final phase of the certified Finance Bill was gone through the Council with a somewhat thin attendance. Sir James Grigg said he was glad to be in upper air and calmer House. The complaint by many members yesterday was that even if it was necessary for the Governor-General to certify salt duty why did he restore the reduction made in postal rate. Sir James Grigg maintained that 50 lakhs was a substantial sum in a budget of eight crores and reminded the House how the Governor-General on a previous occasion had to restore salt duty when reduction had happened to encourage the belief that there would be any greater (?) in the budget as a whole in the year now closing than what had been forecast. On the other hand the revenues under sugar and salt showed a slight decline. Let the House remember that the Government of India had to see that provincial autonomy was given a sound financial start in 1937-38 and that in the succeeding years also the financial position in the provinces was at least equally sound. And, again, partly on account of separation of Burma and partly from liability on the Central Government under Sir Otto Niemeyer's proposals he calculated that there would be an additional burden of something like five crores a year. If Sir Otto Niemeyer's proposals were to place greater obligation on the Central Government than two crores the difficulty would be greater unless of course the economic condition in India improved more rapidly than it had. Reduction in the postcard rate would mean the recurring of a deficit postal budget seriously affecting the credit of the country.

Sir Frank Noyce confined himself to the vindication of the restoration of card rate from the departmental point of view. Fifty lakhs would mean a gri and there was no recurrent surplus to meet it. The rural population used postcards per head than the urban population and, therefore, the benefit of lower rate would not spread so much to rural areas. The department had been trying its best to reduce expenditure and any suggestion to give it an artificial stimulus by providing 50 lakhs from the general budget would not only result in checking the process of retrenchment but allowing the department a policy of drift, and not to talk of other departments like railways being given a chance to claim a similar artificial stimulus. The best policy was to let the half-anna postcard come in the normal way. Don't believe in an artificial stimulus. We are as keen as you are to have the half-anna postcard. But the time has not yet come.

the sacrifices made by managing agencies and large amounts of profits earned by managing agents for shareholders. All that could not be achieved if the managing agents had not been certain that their long period of agreements would not be interfered with and there would be no arbitrary time limit imposed which might prevent them from making good their outlays and recouping their losses. The interests of Indian trade and industry, Sir Leslie concluded, would not be served by the uncertainty which might arise from the enactment of sub-section (2) and by driving an arbitrary coach and four through the sanctity of contracts. The sub-section would establish a dangerous precedent which the House ought to resist.

Sir N. N. Sirocar opposed the amendment. Though he agreed that the provision was expropriatory, there were other considerations, which had induced the Government to impose certain restrictions. In fact, the Select Committee had adopted the golden mean. Sir Nripendra recapitulated several provisions in the Bill concerning the powers of managing agencies as they now were and as they would be under the new Act and said that the Government would oppose the amendment of Sir Leslie in the same manner as they would any attempts of others to restrict those powers any further. Sir Nripendra took the opportunity to indicate the Government's attitude in regard to some of the important amendments tabled. As regard the transfer or assignment of office, while the Government might be prepared to consider any attempt to define the powers they would strongly oppose any attempt to make the transfer of an agency permissible without the approval of the shareholders. Again, if the House was generally opposed to it, the Government would not support any claim for compensation.

The amendment of the European group was rejected without a division.

The Congress party's amendment regarding the tenure of office of managing agents was moved by Mr. Govindballabh Pant with a speech lasting 90 minutes. The object of the amendment was to provide that the tenure of managing agents appointed before the commencement of the new Act should also be twenty years and they should cease to hold office at any time after 5 years from the commencement of the new Act if the company by a resolution at the general meeting decided to terminate his services provided no such resolution shall be passed unless thirty years have elapsed since the managing agent or his predecessor first occupied such office. The amendment further provided that nothing in this sub-section 2 of clause 42 shall prejudice the right of the company to re-appoint the managing agent or to determine his office before the prescribed period in accordance with any provision in the articles of the company or in any agreement with the company.

Mr. Pant summing up his case said: "Industry is not an isolated concern of share-holders and managing agents. It reacts on the entire people on their economic condition, on their standard of living and of everything that conduces to their material well-being. When the two is coupled with the policy of discriminating protection it becomes the direct concern of the people more especially when the people have paid for protection far more than the original capital of firms. You cannot ask the people to maintain an industry that cannot pay its way by depriving it of the assistance of competent men. I want to see the day when we may not import a single article from abroad and when Indian industries may compete with the rest of the world but this can happen only if proper men are engaged in the work of manufacture and undue importances are not paid to the old obsolete managing agency agreements."

The House at this stage adjourned till the 28th Sept.

#### THE CANTONMENTS BILL (CONTD.)

**28th. SEPTEMBER:—**After a dull question hour to-day the Assembly started the third reading of the Cantonment Bill. Sj. Mohanlal Saksena congratulated Mr. Tottenham on the compromising spirit exhibited by him. Mr. Saksena wanted an assurance from the Government with regard to the working of the various provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Tottenham assured the House that provisions regarding the election of non-official members would be very satisfactory from the non-official viewpoint and promised to put the Bill into operation without any delay. The Government had every intention of starting off bazar committees by providing them with real chances of exercising their powers and responsibilities. As regards private lands he said that no attempt would be made to interfere with them. The Bill was passed.

THE COMPANIES BILL (CONTD.)

The Government next cleared the most difficult hurdle in the Companies Act Amendment Bill, viz, Pandit Pant's amendment. It was a notable victory for the Congress, in view of the fact that viz, Pandit Pant's amendment had the best possible advocacy, besides the mover, from Bhulabhai Desai, Mr. Satyamurthi and at the last moment from Mr. Jinnah who sprang a surprise by veering round Pandit Pant. The independents with a handful of followers voted with the Congress Party while Messrs Aney, Akhil Dutt, Pandit Malaviya, and Sardar Sant Singh voted with the Government. Indeed the debate on the Pandit's amendment reached a high water mark. The first speaker of the day was Sir Homy Mody who vigorously defended the managing agency system and characterised the amendment as mischievous. Others who spoke in the same strain were Sir Cowasji Jéhangir, Mr. Aney and Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatulla.

Speaking on Pandit G. B. Pant's amendment, Sir *Homy Mody* expressed surprise that even dacoits, prisoners and thieves excited sympathy but not the managing agents. What had the latter done to incur so much odium? The managing agents had, in the face of public apathy, Government's indifference and lack of technical skill and various other obstacles, built in India industries which had placed this country among a dozen industrial countries of the world. It was due to managing agents that three thousand five hundred million yards of cloth of the total requirement of four thousand five hundred million yards was manufactured in India and nearly half the total production of cotton consumed in India. In the steel industry a town with a population of a hundred thousand men had been built. Pandit Pant's amendment would whittle the twenty years fixed in the Bill.

Mr. *Satyamurthi* said that Sir H. P. Mody had misrepresented the position. There was no automatic removal of managing agents but only if the shareholders so desired and that five years from now and only after the managing agent had been in office for thirty years. What were the managing agent's sacrifices compared to those of the consumer? Sir H. P. Mody should be grateful to the Congress for promoting the Swadeshi movement. While Sir H. P. Mody was egging the Government to pass ordinances, volunteers were picketting foreign cloth shops to enable the millowners to make more profits.

Sir *Cowasji Jéhangir* said that Mr. Pant's amendment would not remove defects. It sought to put new managing agents in place of old (Mr. Pant: No). There was no room for managing agents to draw commission when the company made no profit. They must not take commission on production. The amendment did not remedy this defect. He would not allow the managing agent to draw remuneration merely because of sanctity of contracts.

Mr. *Aney* wondered what particular gain the mover would achieve by his amendment. There should be a common law which would govern the managing agents, both old and new. The removal of these agents would cause havoc in industry.

Sir *N. N. Sircar*, replying to the debate, said that the Bill had 700 clauses and 400 amendments had been tabled. The Government had made up their mind in respect of only three matters to resist change to the utmost in the interest of saving the Bill. One had already been disposed of, relating to the system of proportional representation, the other related to the tenure of managing agents while the third had not yet arisen. Continuing, Sir N. N. Sircar asked Mr. Satyamurthi whether he had heard of Bombay corner aimed at displacing managing agents. If Mr. Pant's amendment was passed this disgraceful method would not only crop up in Bombay but also arise in all parts of India. The Government must bear in mind the case of such managing agents as had for instance succeeded only two years ago and raised funds in the hope of long run of the agency. They would be ruined if contract be terminable at the end of five years. On the other hand, the Government's arbitrary limit of twenty years would at least give enough time for readjustment. The question worth considering was where terms were unconscionable. Sir N. N. Sircar said that he held out no threat but could not disguise from the House the fact that if Mr. Pant's amendment were carried it would cause such an upheaval and the situation would be full of such mischief and danger with immense possibility of retarding industrial development in India that the Government would rather have the old law than the new one with this provision.

ARYA MARRIAGE VALIDATION BILL—(CONTD.)

29th. SEPTEMBER:—The consideration of Dr. *Khare's* Arya Marriage Validation Bill was resumed to-day. Mr. Bajoria's amendment moved in the previous sitting

having been rejected, Dr. Khare asked why Arya Samajists should be forced to maintain registers when no other community was made to do so in respect of the numerous laws on the statute book.

Mr. *Umar Ali Shah*, supporting the Bill, quoted Manu and Sanskrit Slokas from Hindu scriptures to show that international marriages were prohibited among the Hindus. He therefore urged that steps should be taken to present the application of provision of the Bill to non-Arya Samajist Hindus.

Dr. *Bhagawandas* challenged Mr. Shah's contention and wanted mere declaration by a man that he was an Arya Samajist to be considered a sufficient proof of his religion.

Mr. *Aney* referred to the difficulties which might arise due to non-clarification in the Bill of the definition of an Arya Samajist. He did not mind even if it were laid down that for the purpose of the Bill an Arya Samajist was a person who was a member of the Arya Samaj for one day before his marriage.

Mr. *Gadgil* reminded the House that in the past an attempt made by the *Leader* succeeded in getting the following definition of a Hindu: "A Hindu is a Hindu who calls himself a Hindu." So was the case with Muslims and Parsees. He said that the Arya Samajists represented a militant section of the Hindu community and if the term Hindu could not be defined, so also could not the term Arya Samajist.

Sir *Cowanji Jehangir* said what they should provide against was the sham conversions for the sake of marriage. It was possible under the Bill for a man and woman of any community to contract a valid marriage by declaring that they had become Arya Samajist. He hoped the Government would appease the apprehensions expressed in the matter.

Sir *N. N. Sircar* replying mentioned to the House a case in which a Hindu woman wishing to get rid of her husband became a convert to Islam and as the husband would not follow suit, the marriage was dissolved. Thereafter she was reconverted into Hinduism and married another Hindu. The court held the entire transaction valid. What the High Court would say on appeal remained to be seen. The people who were converted into Islam an hour or two before marriage were held to have contracted a valid Muslim marriage. No question of bonafide or mala fide intention came into consideration. He assured Sir *M. Yakub* that if the Bill had justified in the slightest degree the suspicions of Sir *Muhammad* the Law Member would not have supported it. But Mr. *Bajoria's* amendment would invalidate the marriage even of an Arya Samajist. Continuing, the Law Member said that the term Muslim had not been defined in any act of the Legislature.

Mr. *Bajoria's* amendment was negatived without a division.

Mr. *Bajoria* next moved that retrospective effect should not be given to the Bill. He feared that such effect might lead to illegitimate children being declared legal heirs. The House at this stage adjourned.

#### THE COMPANIES BILL (CONTD.)

**30th. SEPTEMBER:**—Resuming consideration of the Companies Bill to-day, *Pandit Pant* said that a managing agent should be dismissed for a fraud, breach of trust, gross negligence and mismanagement. Sir *N. N. Sircar* opposed the amendment in the interest of shareholders as the amendment would restrict the operation of the general law governing the dismissal of servants. The amendment was negatived.

Mr. *S. K. Som* wished to dismiss a managing agent convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude.

Sir *N. N. Sircar* opposing said that ideas of morals changed from man to man and hour to hour. A person who was involved with another man's wife might be the best businessman in the market. The amendment was negatived.

*Pandit Pant* moved an amendment to the effect that when a company went into liquidation the managing agent should not be entitled to any compensation.

Sir *N. N. Sircar* opposing said that the amendment would be unfair to managing agents, for others in the employ of the company would get compensation. Moreover, in cases of voluntary liquidation for the purposes of expansion or interests of the company, it would be highly unfair to pass such a provision. The House rejected the amendment by 50 votes to 44.

After luncheon the amendments moved by Mr. *Paliwal* and others were rejected and the following two amendments of the European group were adopted after verbal alterations:

(a) Provided that the managing agent shall not be liable to be removed under provisions hereof if the offending member, director or officer as aforesaid is expelled

or dismissed by managing agents within thirty days from the date of his conviction, or if his conviction is set aside on appeal.

(2) Provided that in the case of a managing agents' firm a change in the partners thereof shall not be deemed to operate as a transfer of office of the managing agent so long as one of the original partners shall continue to be partner of the managing agents' firm. For the purpose of this proviso the original partners shall mean in the case of managing agents provided before the commencement of the Indian Companies Amendment Act, 1936 partners who were partners at the date of the commencement of the said Act and in the case of managing agents appointed after the commencement of the said Act partners who were partners at the date of appointment.

Replying to Mr. Desai's fear that the provision might give rights of perpetuity to those managing agencies which had lost it, Sir N. N. Sircar said that the Bombay Court ruling remained undisturbed and that the section merely aimed at defining the transfer and assignment under this Bill.

An important change was made when, despite the original objection of the Government and many members, including those of the European group and a few Independents, the House carried, without a division, the amendment of Mr. B. Das that the clause relating to the remuneration of the managing agents, as provided in section 87 C, should apply to any company which appoints a managing agent after the commencement of the new Act, and not only to any company incorporated after the new Act which appoints a managing agent.

The House also carried the motion of Mr. Paliwal intended not to give any office allowance to a managing agent when he is paid a fixed percentage of the net annual profits. The House at this stage adjourned.

#### OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS

**1st. OCTOBER :—**Discussion was resumed to-day on Dr. Khan Sahib's resolution recommending the Government "to take immediate steps to secure that public servants do not interfere directly or indirectly in the ensuing elections to the reformed legislatures." Dr. Khan described the various election meetings he had convened in the Frontier Province and how Government officials either sent the police to prevent the meeting from taking place or arrange dances and drum beatings in the vicinity to disturb the meeting or applied section 144 Cr. P. C. unnecessarily or sent people to provoke a disturbance. Dr. Khan said that he had been working for the Government by preventing his men from molesting these disturbers.

Sir Muhammad Yakub moved an amendment that the unruly conduct of demonstrators likely to cause a breach of the peace, provocative songs and slogans and religious bans against candidates, etc., should be firmly stopped by local authorities.

Mr. Satyamurti objected that the amendment was not relevant and when Sir M. Yakub was replying to him there were some interjections and he sought the protection of the Chair against the "unruly mob in the House."

Mr. Asaf Ali objected to the word "mob" as unparliamentary. The President asked the Opposition to show patience and tolerance to members who did not agree with them. Sir M. Yakub's amendment was held to be in order.

Sir M. Yakub wanted voters to be protected against the coercion of the Congress and the Jamaat-ul-Ulema of Delhi. He recalled how rotten eggs were thrown in Poona at Sir Cowasji Jehangir.

Sir N. N. Sircar. (Law Member), announced that the Government were prepared to accept both Dr. Khan Sahib's resolution and Sir M. Yakub's amendment or either of them. Non-interference in elections had been the policy of the Government and that policy would continue. He did not think that Dr. Khan Sahib had any cause for complaint because he had succeeded everywhere and even converted policemen to the Congress creed. (Laughter). Government servants, said Sir Nripendra, numbered tens of thousands and it was easy to imagine that there might be a case where the Government's orders proved ineffectual. The Government had not encouraged or acquiesced in any breach of the rules. He called the attention of the House to the Bengal Government's statement, arising out of Mr. Fazlul Haq's letter to the Bengal Governor, that definite instructions had been issued to district officials enjoining the strictest neutrality in the elections. Sir Nripendra reminded the House that whereas earlier in the day Mr. Satyamurti and 20 other voices had said that the boy injured in the football ground in Simla yesterday was dead, he had received a letter from the boy's father showing that the boy did not have even a grievous hurt and was not in hospital. He quoted this to show that when charges had been brought forward it did not necessarily follow that they were correct. He

assured the House that the Government had assumed responsibility for the actions of its officials, and it was the desire of the Government to take serious notice of breaches of neutrality—of breaches which were proved and brought home against officers.

*Sir Aubrey Metcalfe* (Foreign Secretary) referred to the activities of the "Red Shirts" in the Frontier during the 1932 elections and said that the Government would abdicate their functions if efforts were not made to see that all political parties were enabled to exercise their votes without fear or favour. Previous to that election the Red Shirts were trained to demonstrate in drilled masses and to enforce their will by threats and coercion. They had attempted to establish what might be called an independent government and exercised civil and criminal power. Already public meetings were being held in the Frontier under the auspices of the "Red Shirts" on the doctrine of class and racial hatred. The latest reports indicated a tendency on the part of speakers to go even further and urge the audience to seek complete independence and "Red Shirt" dictatorship. Another disturbing factor was that certain emissaries of "Red Shirts" attempted to embroil the Government with the Afridis across the border and also tamper with the loyalty of public servants.

*Sir Henry Craik* said that the Government of India a short time ago reminded local Governments of the existence of the rule regarding neutrality and all local Governments had recently issued instructions calling the attention of their servants to this. It was difficult to see what more the Government could have done. Inquiries showed that a majority of the allegations made in the Press were without foundation. The fact remained that no charge was made during the course of the debate.

*Mr. Jimmah* : I refrained from going into it after the statement made by the Law Member, otherwise I would have said a great deal.

"The Government", said the *Home Member*, "cannot tolerate illegal or seditious activities merely because these are carried on under the cover of an electioneering campaign. While it is the duty of all executive officers, indeed all officers of the Government to maintain an attitude of complete detachment towards the various parties contending for the suffrage of the electorate, it is at the same time equally the duty of the Government to protect the structure of law and order and the machinery of administration from subversive and unconstitutional attacks. "This is specially necessary during the process of change over from one form of constitution to another. Neither the Government nor its officers can stand by and let the campaign degenerate into a dissemination of sedition among the masses, the intimidation of rival candidates and their supporters or fostering of revolutionary mentality in the preparation for a fresh campaign of direct action."

The motion was thrown out without a division, and the House adjourned

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS DISALLOWED

**2nd. OCTOBER :—**Before the commencement of the day's business, *Pandit Govinda Ballav Pant* and *Mr. Mohanlal Saxena* moved an adjournment motion each. The former sought to adjourn the house to discuss alleged refusal by Government to finance the Walchand Hindu Steamship Company. The President ruled the motion out of order. *Mr. Saxena* by his adjournment motion sought to censure the Government of India for their failure to insist upon the U. P. Government to observe secrecy of ballots in rural areas. This motion was disallowed by the Governor-General.

#### THE COMPANIES BILL ( CONTD. )

The debate on the Companies Bill was then resumed. Clause forty-two was further discussed. The following agreed amendment of *Sir Homi Mody* was adopted without division : Except with the consent of three-fourths of the directors present and entitled to vote on a resolution a managing agent of a company, or firm of which he is partner or any partner of such firm or if the managing agent is a private company a member of director thereof shall not enter into any contract for sale, purchase or supply of goods and materials with a company, provided nothing herein contained shall affect any contract for such sale, purchase or supply entered into before the commencement of the new Act.

Considerable discuss. followed on *Pandit Pant's* amendment relating to restriction on managing agent's powers of management. The President read the Governor-General's message disallowing *Mr. Saxena's* adjournment motion on the ground that it was a matter not primarily the concern of the Government of India.

There was an interesting debate on *Sir Cowasji's* amendment urging the deletion of section 87-b, namely, "managing agent shall not of his own account engage in any

which is of the same nature as the business carried on by the company under his management. Mr. *Hudson* and Mr. *Chapman Mortimer* supported Sir *Cowasji's* viewpoint as such a clause would hamper business and put restriction on trade.

Eventually the House adopted Mr. *Satyawurthi's* amendment which stated that the managing agent should not engage himself in any business which is of the same nature and directly competing with the business carried on by the company under his management or by a subsidiary company to such a company.

The House also adopted Mr. *Ananashillingam's* amendment declaring that the office of the managing agent shall be vacated if he is adjudged insolvent.

Mr. *Satyawurthi* moved an amendment that no managing agent shall have any power to appoint more than one director of the Company of which he is the managing agent. Discussion had not concluded when the House adjourned till the 5th.

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS DISALLOWED

**5th. OCTOBER :—**Two adjournment motions were disallowed to-day, one by the President and the other by the Governor General. The one disallowed by the President was moved by Pandit *Lakshmitani Maistra* to discuss the death under suspicious circumstances of a detenu named Navajiban Ghose in the district of Faridpur. The second adjournment motion related to the continued ban on the recital of "Mad-dhesabeha" at Lucknow by the U. P. Government. Although the President accepted the motion, the Governor-General disallowed it.

#### THE COMPANIES BILL ( CONTD. )

The House accepted Mr. *Pant's* amendment, making it clear that managing agents shall not appoint more than one-third number of directors. Another amendment accepted made wilful contravention of section 44 regarding the maintenance of a register by companies containing particulars of contracts punishable by fine not exceeding Rs. 500.

The House accepted Mr. *Bajoria's* amendment adding to clause 55 that where the directors decided to increase the capital of a company by the issue of fresh shares they should offer them at the first instance to the existing shareholders in proportion to the shares of the same class held by them respectively and should offer for subscription to persons other than existing shareholders only such portion of those shares as had not been subscribed by the existing shareholders.

Mr. *Chapman Mortimer's* amendment to clause 63 was adopted by 46 votes to 42 providing that an investment company, that is to say, a company whose principal business was acquisition and holding of shares, stocks, debentures or other securities should not be deemed to be the holding of the company by reason only that part of its assets consisted in 51 per cent or more of the shares of another company.

Mr. *Dutt's* amendment to clause 64 which was also accepted stated that in the case of a company managed by a managing agent, the managing agent or where the managing agent was a firm or company and in any other case director or directors who had knowingly by their act of omission been the cause of any default by the company in complying with the requirements of this section should in respect of such offence be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 1,000.

Another important amendment adopted was by Mr. *Ananthasayanam* which entailed that a company besides its balance sheet should also publish a profit or loss account or income and expenditure account. The House then adjourned.

**5th. OCTOBER :—**There was a lengthy discussion of the Government amendment omitting the provision whereby registered accountants certified by the Accountancy Board could sign balance sheets in the capacity of auditors by styling themselves Chartered Accountants (India). The amendment was opposed by Mr. K. K. Malaviya, Pandit G. B. Pant, Sir C. Jehangir and Mr. M. A. Jinnah, who wanted steps to be taken to ensure that Indian accountants should be able to pass the examination in India in order to acquire the same status as Chartered Accountants (England.) Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed did not desire the Government Department to grant such a degree but by a corporate body.

Sir N. N. Sircar explained that there was difference at present between the syllabus of chartered accountants (England) and registered accountants (India). Therefore, until the examination for the latter was made stiffer it was unfair to place both on the same status. He assured the House that the Government had under con-



sideration the question of creating a body in India which could grant degrees similar to those of chartered accountants (England).

**7th. OCTOBER :—**The House accepted to-day Sir *H. P. Mody's* amendment which made it possible for a banking company to become the managing agent of another banking company.

Two amendments of Mr. *Sripalaksh* and Mr. *A. C. Dutt* were accepted and one amendment of Mr. Chapman Mortimer was defeated. The House next accepted the following amendment of Mr. Chapman Mortimer : "A banking company shall not form or hold shares in any subsidiary company of its own formed for the purpose of undertaking and executing trusts, undertaking the administration of estates as executor, trustee or otherwise and such other purposes as set forth in section 277-E as are identical to business of accepting deposits of money on current account or otherwise."

Another amendment of Mr. *A. C. Dutt* was accepted which penalised directors and other officers of a company for inter alia appointing managing agents two years after the passage of the Bill and creating charge on any unpaid capital of the company by a bank.

Several minor amendments were accepted during the afternoon. There was a lengthy discussion on Mr. *Patiwal's* amendment which laid down that all companies (including foreign companies) should prepare balance sheets for submission before the general meeting and registration before the Registrar. The House divided and by 41 to 52 votes rejected the amendment.

Mr. *Joshi* withdrew his amendment which sought to protect the provident fund and other funds constituted by the company for the benefit of the employees on receiving an undertaking from Sir *N. N. Sircar* that an amendment to the Bill would be moved in the Council of State to the effect that the provident fund amount consisting of the employers and employees contributions should be invested in trust securities, that in the case of the fund which had accrued up to the time of passing of the Act companies should be allowed ten years' time within which to invest the funds in trust securities, that amounts to be invested should consist of equal annual instalments spread over ten years and the interest accruing should be invested without taking into account the period of ten years.

One of Mr. *Ayyangar's* amendments was passed, while an amendment of Prof. *Ranga* proposing that each company shall distribute part of its profit among the workers and also provide for benefit schemes for workers was objected to by Sir *H. P. Mody* and disallowed by the President.

At 5 p. m. the President wished to adjourn the House, but all sections declared that they could finish the Bill in half an hour.

Sir *N. N. Sircar* rose amidst deafening cheers to move the third reading of the Bill. He said that this was the eighteenth sitting of the Bill. He acknowledged the hearty co-operation from all sections of the House and acknowledged the immense service rendered by Mr. *S. C. Sen* (cheers).

Finally, the formal amendments were moved by Mr. *Sen* and adopted. The House passed the Bill amidst cheers and adjourned.

#### OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS (Contd.)

**8th. OCTOBER :—**The adjournment debate on Dr. *Khan Sahib's* motion against official interference in elections was resumed to-day.

Sir *Henry Cruise*, continuing his speech, referred to a U. P. Court of Wards circular and said that under the Act of 1933 this body was non-official and its President and Secretary, even though officials lent by the Government, were non-officials. The court of wards, representing important agricultural interest, was justified in using its votes to prevent the election of candidates who belonged to the Congress Party. Accordingly, certain officials employed by the ward were free to canvass for candidates.

Mr. *A. C. Dutt* supporting the resolution said that although many cases of Government servants interfering in elections had come to the notice of the Government, in none of those cases any punishment was inflicted. That was the reason why this practice had not stopped.

Mr. *Pankaj Ray* complained that in Bengal public servants in transferred departments were openly canvassing for candidates of the Ministerial party and opening those of the Congress Party. Their representations against such canvassing had some effect but the methods used were so artistic and ingenious that it was difficult to

combat them. It was rumoured that certain posts in these transferred departments were not being filled until on the eve of the elections in order to fill them with those people who helped the ministry in the election campaign. Moreover, some District Magistrates were using repressive laws against the Praja Party men. He knew that at least one District Magistrate issued order that the Praja Party men be interned.

*Sardar Sant Singh* concluding said that there was another curse in India, namely, the Indian States, who were setting up people surreptitiously in the election campaign.

*Sir A. H. Gausman*, opposing the resolution, expressed the opinion that the Government could not restrict the liberty of a public servant. The Governor of Bengal had unequivocally declared that there would be no interference in election by the Government servants.

*Mr. Griffiths* asked Mr. Fazlul Huq in which country of the world ministers, when in power, were not participating in electioneering campaign. As regards the internment of members of the Praja Party, did he want immunity for them against internment?

*Mr. Fazlul Huq*: "That apostle of electioneering purity" only two months ago wanted support from the Governor of Bengal in favour of his Party as against another party. His Excellency replied that neither he nor any public servant would have anything to do with the electioneering campaign.

Continuing *Mr. Griffiths* amidst many interruptions answered *Mr. A. C. Dutt's* points and categorically denied *Mr. Dutt's* allegation that officials were being transferred from place to place in order to manipulate the elections. He also denied the allegation that a certain Sub-Divisional Officer was engaged in fomenting communal dissensions and explained what that officer was doing for the people.

#### GOVERNMENT'S CURRENCY POLICY

The adjournment motion of *Mr. Ayyangar* relating to the currency policy was then taken up. *Mr. Ayyangar* recalled the history of exchange and declared that 1-1 ratio had worked to the disadvantage of India and had reduced the balance trade in India's favour from 150 crores in 1928 to 75 crores in 1929, 33 crores in 1932-33 and 3 crores in 1933-34.

*Sir James Grigg*—What about the next two years?

*Mr. Ayyangar* said that they had improved to 13 and 19 crores, but this was small compared with the previous balances. Statistics from March last onward also showed the same result.

*Sir James Grigg*—The results of the first five months work out to a merchandise export surplus which was at the rate of 60 crores a year.

*Prof. Banga*, placing the point of view of peasants, complained that the Government of India did not enter into a bilateral trade agreement as recommended in *Mr. Jinnah's* resolution at the time of denouncing Ottawa Agreement.

*Sir James Grigg* repeated his previous statement that the Government of India did not intend in any way to embark or take part in competitive depreciation of currency and that they intended by every means in their power to maintain the present sterling parity of the rupee.

*Pandit G. B. Pant* said that while monkeying with the ratio should be avoided. donkeying with it was an expression of perverse stupidity.

*Sir James Grigg*—I don't mind what language a member uses so long as he realises that this obstinacy is fixed and immovable.

*Pandit G. B. Pant*—The Government of India should not regard themselves as immovable for all time. We hope to oust them much sooner than they imagine.

Closure was applied and accepted. The House voted. There was a tie, 52 voting on either side.

The President said: "There being an equality of votes, it means the House has not been able to come to a decision and I, following the well-known principle of *status quo*, vote in favour of the Government."

The motion was rejected by 53-52 votes. The House then adjourned.

#### ARYA MARRIAGE VALIDITY BILL (Contd.)

**SAT. OCTOBER 10:**—The ladies' gallery in the Assembly was over-crowded to-day. *Mr. Anand* said that he was not opposed to the principle of Arya Marriage Validation Bill but there was the other side of the picture which he elucidated.

*Madame Speaker* advised the House to discuss all social legislations with dignity and patience. His fullest sympathy was with the Arya Samajists.

Mr. *Bajoria's* amendment, which proposed to invalidate marriages if the parties any time belonged to non-Arya Samajist Hindus or non-Hindus were rejected.

Sir *Mohd. Yakub* moved an amendment to the effect that a marriage would be invalid if the contracting parties any time belonged to a religion other than Hinduism. He said that this legislation would affect their religion.

*Bardar Sant Singh's* suggestion for common marriage and succession laws in India could not be supported by Muslims, whose religion was not a man-made religion. Islam was a godly religion. It gave women privileges which no other religion gave.

Mr. *Asaf Ali* declared that Muslims' fears were unjustified, being based purely on suspicion, for the Bill clearly stated that a marriage must be between two Arya Samajists. The movers of the two amendments had wasted two days of the House.

Sir *Mohd. Zafarullah* asked what was the position at present of a marriage between two Arya Samajists (man and woman) who at one time belong to other religions.

Mr. *Bhulabhai Desai* expressed the opinion that such a marriage was valid under the present law.

Mr. *Asaf Ali*, concluding, declared that the words objected to by Sir *Mohd. Yakub* in the Bill merely cleared the present position. The Bill, therefore, would not affect Muslims.

*Bardar Sant Singh* said that the laws relating to evidence and procedure were already common to all communities. The time had come when the various communities should pool their resources together, sit together and devise common laws of marriage, succession and inheritance.

Mr. *Ghulamhik Naurang* regretted that Mr. *Asaf Ali* tried to speak as a judicial authority. He warned the House that already numerous cases of seduction of one community or the other were going on. This Bill would give encouragement to those engaged in this nefarious game. The Bill would encourage fake conversions and would be in conflict with the established laws of the various communities.

*Pondit K. K. Malaviya* said that those who wished to deprive a Muslim girl of the right of marrying a Hindu husband by becoming an Arya Samajist should stop Muslim girls going to schools and attending parties. If a Hindu girl could become Muslim and marry a Muslim husband what was wrong if a Muslim girl could become Hindu and marry a Hindu husband?

Mr. *Azharali* said that this was the first time in his five years' membership when religious fanaticism of both sides found expression. He contended that this was bad on the eve of the elections. Hindu religion did not permit conversions.

*Maulana Shaukat Ali* said that he would be the last Muslim to encourage a Muslim girl embracing another religion. He supported the amendment. The House then adjourned.

#### THE INDIAN TEA CESS BILL

**10th. OCTOBER :—**Quick progress was made in the Assembly to-day with the Government Bills. The Indian Tea Cess Bill was moved for consideration by Sir *Zafarullah Khan*.

After consideration of the motion was adopted a series of amendments was moved and owing to a previous understanding several of them were accepted by the Government. The House adopted Mr. *A. C. Datta's* amendment that, instead of twenty members, the Indian Tea Marketing Expansion Board should consist of twenty-seven as follows: Two on the recommendation of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, one on the recommendation of the Madras Chamber, one on the recommendation of the Associated Chamber of Commerce, one on the recommendation of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, one on the recommendation of the South Indian Chamber of Commerce, five on the recommendation of the Indian Tea Association, Calcutta, two on the recommendation of the Assam branch of the Indian Tea Association, two on the recommendation of the United Planters' Association of South India, two on the recommendation of the Doars Planters' Association, one on the joint recommendation of the Darjeeling planters' Association and the Terai Planters' Association, one on the recommendation of the Indian Tea Planters' Association, one on the recommendation of the Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpaiguri, two on the recommendation of the Government of Bengal (one of whom is to represent the Tea Planters of Tripura and Chittagong, who are Indians), one on the recommendation of the Assam Valley Indian Tea Planters' Association, one on the recommendation of the Burma Valley Planters' Association and one on the recommendation of the Madras Government to represent the Tea Planters in Southern India who are Indians.

The Executive Committee of the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board shall consist of nine members of the Board of whom not less than three shall be Indians. The Bill, as amended, was passed and the House adjourned until 12th.

#### MILITARY MANOEUVRES

**12th. OCTOBER :—**Mr. *Tottenham* introduced a bill to provide facilities for military manoeuvres and for field firing and artillery practice.

#### GENEVA CONVENTION

Mr. *Tottenham* moved consideration of the Geneva Convention implementing the Bill relating to the use of the Red Cross emblem.

Mr. *Sripataksha* asked if the existence of such organisations did not indirectly encourage war.

Mr. *Anantasayanam* said that the development of such institutions should be left to individual nationalities themselves.

Mr. *Tottenham* briefly replied to criticisms after which a few amendments were moved.

The House adopted Mr. *Anantasayanam's* amendment, reducing the fine of Rs. 100 as proposed in the Bill to Rs. 50 for contravention of provisions prohibiting the use of imitations of the emblem of the Red Cross. The Bill was passed.

#### RUBBER BILL

Thereafter, Sir *Mahomed Zafnullah* moved the Rubber Control Act Amending Bill. Briefly the object of the Bill was to bring the Indian Act into conformity with the international rubber regulations. The Bill was passed.

Sir *Aubrey Metcalfe* moved consideration of the Bangalore Marriages Validating Bill and hoped that it would be passed with the maximum expedition and minimum discussion in the interest of infants born of these marriages.

#### TEA CONTROL BILL

Sir *Mahomed Zafnullah* moved consideration of the Tea Control Bill. He accepted two amendments of Prof. Ranga one of which provided that the funds of the Tea licensing committee shall lapse to the Government of India and the funds of the Burma tea licensing authority shall lapse to the Burma Government. The second amendment provided that the Governor-General in Council shall constitute the Burma tea licensing authority "after consulting the Government of Burma." The Bill was passed.

#### RED CROSS BILL

Mr. *Tottenham* moved consideration of the Red Cross Society (Allocation of Property) Bill. He said that Burma would get seven per cent of the present value of the original corpus and not seven per cent of the original value. Thus Burma would receive five and a quarter lakhs instead of 4.37 lakhs as mentioned previously.

Mr. *Spence* moved consideration of the Bill amending the general clauses Act with a view to making it clear that the repeal of the Amending Act did not affect continuance of amendments made in the parent Act.

Mr. A. S. *Ayyangar* had a motion for circulation. Mr. *Spence* stated that local Governments and High Courts had been consulted and the latter's suggestions had been incorporated in the Bill. The Bill was passed.

Sir *Mahomed Zafnullah* moved consideration of the Chittagong Port Act Amending Bill. Mr. *Spence* moved a formal amendment which was carried and the Bill as amended was passed. The House then adjourned.

#### C. P. C. AMENDMENT BILL

**13th. OCTOBER :—**Sir *Henry Craik* moved to-day the consideration of the Bill amending the Civil Procedure Code as reported by the Select Committee. The House had already accepted the principle of the Bill, namely, that the honest debtor would be saved from imprisonment. The Select Committee had made certain changes in favour of the debtor. It had also provided that a person who was guilty of breach of trust should not escape imprisonment. After explaining the provisions of the amended Bill Sir *Henry* said that the Bill was a reasonable compromise between the views that it did not go far enough and that it went too far.

Mr. Ranga supported the Bill, but felt that it did not go half as far as it should have. He contended that if the Government had real concern for the masses the Bill should have been passed at the last Delhi session.

Mr. Naveiras thought that the scope of the Bill was too wide in as much as it attempted to protect debtors in order to ruin creditors.

Mr. Anoy, Mr. Asahar Ali and Mr. Kabiruddin Ahmed strongly supported the Bill. Mr. Ananthasayanam narrated instances of how creditors always tried to take the life blood of debtors.

The motion for consideration was adopted. Several amendments were moved, but all of them were lost.

Mr. Gadgil, supported by Mr. Ranga, sought protection for the agriculturist (as defined in section 2 of the Deccan Agriculturist Relief Act of 1930) from arrest in execution of money decrees. The *Home Member* promised to consult the local Governments on the matter and find out how far they could move in this direction, but could not give a definite pledge to bring in an amending Bill.

The amendment was negatived. Without further discussion Sir Henry Oak's Bill to amend the Civil Procedure Code was passed.

#### THE TRADE DISPUTES BILL

Thereafter Sir Frank Noyce moved circulation of the Bill to amend the Trade Dispute Act, 1929, for eliciting public opinion. Sir Frank mentioned the objects of the Bill and referred to Mr. Giri's criticism of it in Delhi newspapers. That criticism showed that Mr. Giri had, so far as this measure went, little contact with realities. Sir Frank Noyce emphasised the following considerations: Firstly, whereas the present section declares certain strikes and lock-outs as illegal from the outset, no strike or lock-out under the new clause would be illegal until notified; secondly, whereas under the present section an illegal strike is always illegal, it is illegal only for a limited period under the clause and thirdly, under the existing section there is no guarantee that any genuine grievances behind a strike will be investigated. The new clause gives such a guarantee; fourthly, public utility service strikes will be placed exactly in the same position as strikes in ordinary industry in respect of investigation of grievances, though men in public utility service will not be allowed to go on strike without notice. Continuing, Sir Frank Noyce said that the appointment of conciliation officers had proved very successful and had been introduced in the Bill, though the time was not ripe for making their appointment compulsory.

Mr. Joshi sincerely regretted that Sir Frank Noyce should, towards the end of his term of office, be associated with legislation so hostile to labour interests. The only main provision of the Bill, which had the speaker's approval, was that relating to conciliation officers. When Mr. Joshi had reconciled himself to the original Act he thought that the advantages of the machinery for settlement would outweigh the disadvantages penalizing the employees of public utility services.

Mr. Morgan offered few criticisms on various clauses and hoped that on another occasion ample opportunity will be afforded to discuss various aspects of the Bill.

Mr. Giri said that workers doubted the bonafides of the Government as they never seriously attempted to use the 1929 Act for the benefit of the workers.

Sir Frank Noyce answered the various points raised in the debate and repudiated the suggestion that the local Government used administrative power for breaking up strikes.

The House agreed to the motion for circulation and adjourned.

#### THE COMPANIES BILL (CONTD.)

15th. OCTOBER:—The Secretary read a message to-day from the Council of State giving the amendments made in the Companies Bill and Sir N.N. Sircar moved adoption of those amendments. All the amendments were agreed to without discussion except that, when the amendment relating to the Provident Fund money being invested in certain securities was moved, Sir Leslie Hudson declared that it was unreasonable to force the employers by a statute to invest money in any particular securities.

Sir Leslie's opposition did not find support and the House finally passed the Companies Bill amidst applause.

Sir James Grigg said that he had pledged himself to the leader of the Opposition not to move in the session the supplementary demands and consideration of the report of the Public Accounts Committee, but that the demands for the express grants for

1934-35 should be passed as they were pure routine matters and had been recommended by the Public Accounts Committee. All the excess grants were voted.

#### MILITARY MANOEUVRES BILL

Mr. *Tottenham* then moved circulation of the Military Manoeuvres Bill. He said that Government would, when opinions were received, refer the Bill to a select committee. Mr. *B. Das* opposed the Bill as it involved encroachment on the liberties of the people and of civil administration. Other non-official speeches were more helpful to the circulation motion. There was an all-round recognition that the existing practice, which was faulty, would be improved and legalized. Mr. *Aspy's* speech crystallised the attitude of the Opposition which was not opposed to the circulation but desired safe-guards to protect the rights and interests of cultivators and landowners as found in the English Act which the present Bill did not fully adopt. Mr. *Tottenham* emphasised that changes in the Constitution would not affect the question and promised to forward all the points of the debate while circulating the Bill.

The motion for circulation was agreed to.

#### HINDU WOMEN'S INHERITANCE BILL

Dr. *Deshmukh* moved for a select committee of 18 members on his Bill to amend the Hindu law governing Hindu women's right to property. Sir *N. N. Sircar* said that the Government were prepared to support the Bill in so far as rights intended to be given to widows. Dr. *Deshmukh* assured that he also would be prepared to confine the Bill to widows.

The committee consists of members of all parties.

#### THE DURGA KHAWAJA BILL

Mr. *G. B. Narang* moved consideration of the Durga Khawaja Bill as passed by the Council of State. Mr. *Narang* said that the shrine was held in high respect not only by Muslims all over India but many Hindus also visited it in a real spirit of devotion. Sir *N. N. Sircar* suggested that the question hour should be dispensed with to-morrow if the House wished to conclude discussion on the Bill.

**16th. OCTOBER :—**The House considered to-day in good humour the Bill providing for better administration of the Durga Khawaja Sahib Muslim Shrine near Ajmer. Owing to a previous arrangement among the Muslim members, numerous amendments were formally moved and adopted without speeches. The Bill was finally passed amidst acclamation.

The President then adjourned the Assembly *sine die*.

# The Bengal Legislative Council

Winter-Session—Calcutta—9th November to 4th December 1936

## NON-AGRICULTURAL LANDS ASSESSMENT BILL

The last session of the Bengal Legislative Council in its protracted career of seven years commenced its sitting in the re-constructed Council Chamber, Calcutta on the 9th. November 1936. Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Ray Chowdhury was in the Chair.

After formal business, Sir *Brojendra Lal Mitra* presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bengal Non-Agricultural Lands Assessment Bill, 1936 and moved that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

The Bill which was introduced in the Council on the 27th March last aimed at providing means of securing the proper assessment of non-agricultural lands. Under the Bengal Tenancy Act 1886 though settlement of fair rent was provided for in agricultural lands non-agricultural lands were specifically excluded from the operation of sections dealing with settlement of fair rent. It had been found that with the growth of towns, the lands originally leased as agricultural holdings had wholly or partly ceased to be used for agricultural purposes. In order to secure the proper revenue on such lands without interfering with contracts between parties which, in so far as the rent was concerned, could not legally extend beyond the term of the settlement made by the Government, it was found desirable to make clear provisions for the assessment of revenue on such lands and to make such assessment legally binding on the Government's direct tenants either in a Government estate or in an estate held "khas" on account of recusancy of the proprietors.

*Mr. P. Banerjee* moved that the Bill be recommitted. Similar motions for recommitment were moved by *Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta* and *Rai Bahadur Satyendra Kumar Das*.

This Bill, said *Mr. Banerjee* in moving his amendment, had given rise to concern among a large number of people who, if its provisions were to be carried into effect, would be practically ruined. A number of public bodies all over the country had protested against the measure. If passed it would have a seriously detrimental effect, on the industry of this country. On those lands a large number of factories had been raised and industrial concerns established. As a result of the assessment these indigenous industries, already suffering from foreign competition and absence of protection by the Government, would be forced to close their business. It was strange to find, the speaker pointed out, that assessment had been proposed to be made at even 300 times the present value of the land. In 1886 when the lands were first leased Government expressed the intention that no profit would be made from the house-holders. People in that belief had settled there and now they were threatened with the prospect of being saddled with heavy burdens. Moreover it was preposterous to think that no appeal could be made against the decision of the Revenue Officer to any judicial court.

Replying *Sir B. L. Mitter* remarked that he was not going to change a single comma in the provisions of the Bill as they stood at present. But accepting the recommendation of the Select Committee he announced that a substantial concession would be given to leasees who had been for a long time using those buildings which they had erected for residential purposes but no concession would be given to people who were letting those buildings out or using for commercial purposes.

The amendment of *Mr. P. Banerjee* when put to vote was carried by 39 to 38 votes, the result being greeted with cheers from the Opposition.

## PRESIDENCY TOWNS INSOLVENCY BILL

Earlier a Bill entitled the *Presidency Towns Insolvency (Bengal Amendment) Bill 1936* on the motion of *Sir B. L. Mitter* was referred to a Select Committee with instructions to submit the report as soon as possible. The House then adjourned.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AMEND. BILL

10th. NOVEMBER :—The Council after more than three hours' deliberation to-day passed the Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill without any modification. All the amendments put forward were lost.

The Hon'ble Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy* presented the report of the select committee on the Bill and moved that the Bill as reported by the select committee be taken into consideration. The Bill provided that the Local-Government with the consent of the district board may by notification abolish any local board. All powers and duties of the local board thus abolished will be exercised by the district board and all funds at the disposal of the local board will be transferred to the district fund. The district board in the absence of the local board will superintend the administration of union boards, within the area under the authority of the district board except in matters relating to *Dafadars* and *Chowkidars*. The life of the district boards will be prolonged to five years instead of 4 years as it is at present. The provision of the Act will come into force in such areas and on such dates as the Local Government may direct.

The discussion of the Bill centred round the amendment put forward by Mr. P. Banerjee which sought to limit the life of the district boards to 3 years instead of 5 years as had been provided in the Bill. Mr. P. Banerjee thought that by limiting the life of the district boards to three years opportunity would be given more frequently to new people for coming in which will increase the efficiency of the administration. Mr. N. K. Basu supporting Mr. P. Banerjee said that he did not regard the change from four to five years necessary. The term of office of district boards was 3 years ever since 1885. This was changed to 4 only at the end of 1893 and they had no experience of how the prolongation had affected the working of the boards and their executive. The period of 5 years was too long a period to allow any executive body to function. Mr. P. N. Guha felt that experience had shown that the period of 3 years as originally provided was productive of efficient administration. Mr. *Abdus Samad* could not see eye to eye with the mover of the amendment and thought the longest period gave the greatest security to the holder of the office.

The amendment was lost by an overwhelming majority. After several more amendments were rejected by the House the Bill as stated was passed. The Council then adjourned.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS BILL

11th. NOVEMBER :—The Council passed in quick succession two Bills, namely, the *Bengal Local Self-Government Association (Recognition) Bill* and the *Bengal Local Self-Government (Second Amendment) Bill*.

The *Bengal Local Self-Government Associations (Recognition) Bill* provides for the recognition by the Local Government of associations formed in Bengal with the sole object of promoting the interest of Local Self-Government in the provinces and to enable the local bodies to pay contribution to the funds of a recognised association and also to defray the travelling expenses of their representatives for attending a general meeting of such associations, subject to certain conditions.

Mr. P. Banerjee moved an amendment that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion by the 1st of April next. Mr. Banerjee in putting forward his motion said that the public opinion was not in favour of the Bill. The Minister had not moreover informed the Council what utility those associations had in public interest. He regarded this measure of the Government with certain misgivings. The amendment was lost.

Two other amendments being rejected the House passed the measure in toto.

LOCAL SELF GO : 2ND. AMEND. BILL

Sir *Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy* then introduced the *Bengal Local Self-Government (Second Amendment) Bill*. Explaining the aims and objects of the Bill the Hon'ble Minister said that the main object of the Bill was to remove certain practical difficulties experienced in giving effect to the existing provisions of section 16-B of the Local Self-Government Act of 1936 which required that the elected and appointed members of a district or local board should make the oath of allegiance within 3 months from the date of publication of their names in the *Calcutta Gazette*. But the selection of candidates for appointment in consultation with the local officers often took time and it sometimes happened that the names of the appointed mem-



bers could not be published within 3 months after the publication of the names of the elected members. As the first meeting of the newly formed board could not be held before the names of both the elected and appointed members were published in the Gazette, the former in such circumstances found no opportunity to make the oath within the time prescribed. In certain recent cases, the speaker went on, some of the civil courts had held that as the elected members had failed to make the oath within the time prescribed they had ceased to hold their offices and therefore those seats had become vacant. To remove that difficulty it was proposed to amend the Section 16-B on the lines of Section 57 of the Bengal Municipal Act, 1932.

Two amendments put forward by Mr. P. Banerjee and Dr. Nares Chandra Sen-Gupta for circulating the Bill for the purpose of eliciting public opinion were lost without division. The Bill, as stated, was passed. The Council then adjourned till the 25th November.

#### RELEASE OF DETENUS

**25th. NOVEMBER :—**The question of release of detenus including Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose engaged most of the attention of the Council to-day. Business for the day was practically confined to answering questions relating to them as well as discussion of a non-official resolution urging their release at the earliest possible date.

By 49 votes to 23, the Council rejected a resolution moved by Mr. Sarish Chandra Roy Chowdhury recommending the early release of all men and women detained under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Suppression of Terrorists Outrages Act or any other measure of similar character.

Mr. Roy Chowdhury, moving the resolution, said that the condition of these detenus was such as to deprave the victims both physically and morally, leading them at times to escape by committing suicide, in the most tragic circumstances. It was time for the Government to cry a halt and make a supreme effort to clear the atmosphere of the dust and cloud of suspicion which hung so heavily to-day over Bengal. He emphasised that this was their parting message to the out-going Government of Bengal and it was offered with the best motives and most sincere wishes. There would be no peace in the land until the demand was fully accepted.

The resolution was supported by Mr. J. N. Basu, Liberal leader, and Mr. B. C. Chatterjee. Mr. Basu pointed out that the public mind had been deeply moved by the reports of cases of suicide occurring among detenus. Detention without trial for an indefinite period could not but tend to unhinge their minds. In the interests of all concerned, it was necessary that this great act of justice should be done without delay. Mr. Chatterjee said that when the Congress and its leaders and even Communists had condemned violence, the Government should lose no time in releasing the detenus.

Sir Robert Reid, Home Member, replying on behalf of the Government, said that they would be taking unjustifiable risks if they let out all these detenus straightway. "We have our duties to the public and to our own officers and we shall be failing in these duties if we agree to the proposal."

Sir Robert added that the Government were not unmindful of their duties to the detenus and were releasing them so far as it was compatible with the safety of the State. In view, however, of the past experience, the Government felt that they would not be justified in ordering a general amnesty so far as these men and women were concerned.

#### PATNI TALUQS REGULATION AMEND. BILL

**26th. NOVEMBER :—**Sitting for two hours and a half to-day the Council discussed as many as five non-official bills, of which only one was passed, one circulated, and the rest were either withdrawn or rejected.

The Hon'ble Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bengal Patni Taluqs Regulation (Amendment) Bill and Raja Bahadur Bhupendra Narayan Sinha of Nashipur moved that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

The object of the Bill was to amend the Bengal Patni Taluqs Regulation of 1819 and make the provision that on the application of any of the parties to any suit relating to the sale of a 'taluq' or the disposal of purchase money of the Taluq sold, the Civil Court might direct that any sum held in deposit under the 4th clause of section 17 of the Regulation should be invested pending the further orders of the court, and thereupon the Collector should remit the said sum to the Court for investment. The Bill was passed without division.

## THE TANKS PRESERVATION &amp; CONSTRUCTION BILL

The only other Bill which evoked some amount of interest was the Tanks Preservation and Construction Bill moved by Mr. *Narendra Kumar Basu*. The Bill aimed at the improvement of 'bandhs' and tanks which were the principal sources of irrigation in West Bengal and had mostly gone out of use. It proposed to improve them through the agency of Union Boards, the cost being in the first instance advanced by the Collector and subsequently recovered from the persons benefited as a union rate by instalments spread over a number of years. In April, 1935 at a conference of Union Boards in Bankura district which was presided over by the District Magistrate a resolution was passed asking for legislation on the lines indicated in the Bill. It would be necessary to amend the Village Self-Government Act in the manner indicated in the Bill to give the Union Boards power to carry out the works.

In moving the Bill, Mr. *Narendra Kumar Basu* said that he was sure that people of all districts of Bengal would welcome this measure for not only in West and North Bengal but also in East Bengal there were many tanks which could be improved and used for the purpose of drinking water. There might be, the speaker admitted, some defects and imperfections here and there in the measure, but there could not be two opinions about the principal objects of the Bill. So far as the provision of the Bill was concerned he claimed the sympathy of the members of the House towards it.

Major *J. R. Kindersley* opposed the motion on behalf of the Government and said that Government had realised for some time past that some steps should be taken and taken early to improve the condition of these tanks for the facility of irrigation more particularly. When the Rural Development Act was being drafted it was sought to include provisions in it relating to the same subject. But there were thousands of these tanks in Bengal and each one represented separate irrigation work. The application of the Development Act to such an enormous number of tanks would seem to be impracticable. The present Bill would commit Government to indefinite financial liability. It was the duty of the Government to carry out comprehensive schemes leaving the smaller one like the present to the proprietors of villages. Moreover, during the monsoon of 1935-36 even those tanks which had some use were dry, and a great deal of relief work was hampered. Concluding he requested the mover to withdraw the resolution.

Mr. *N. K. Basu* accordingly withdrew his motion.

## THE FISHERIES BILL

The Bengal Fisheries Bill sponsored by Rai Bahadur *Sarat Chandra Bal* which sought to protect the rights of bonafide fishermen, was circulated for eliciting public opinion.

The *Bengal Cess Amendment Bill* moved by Raja Bahadur *Bhupendra Narain Sinha* of Nashipur which aimed at amending the Cess Act of 1918 was withdrawn. The *Bengal Weights and Measures of Capacity Bill* moved by *Masumi Abdul Hakim* was rejected by the House by 46 to 17 votes. The Council then adjourned.

## PRESIDENCY TOWNS INSOLVENCY AMENDMENT BILL

**27th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed to-day the Presidency Towns Insolvency (Bengal Amendment) Bill and voted supplementary grants on various heads of which the most important was the grant of Rs. 1,65,600 for granting advances to the detenus who have received industrial training.

The principal object of the *Presidency Towns Insolvency Bill* was to appoint a salaried officer as Official Assignee and the cost of his office should be met from the fees and commission arising from the administration of insolvents' estate. The judicial control of the Official Assignee would remain with the High Court and the administrative control of the officer and his staff would be transferred to the Local Government. The appointment of the Official Assignee would be made by the Local Government in consultation with the High Court.

Presenting the report of the Select Committee on the Bill the Hon'ble *Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter* moved that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

Opposing the provision that the appointment of the Official Assignee should be made by Local Government, Mr. *Narendra Kumar Basu* enquired as to the reason of

the proposed change. The Official Assignee had to do a lot of judicial work deciding on claims, on validity of control and he must obviously be an Advocate of the High Court. What chance, Mr. Basu asked, had the Local Government of judging the merits of rival candidates for such a post. The Chief Justice was the only fit person to judge. To Mr. Basu the provision in the Bill was merely a crude attempt to derogate from the privileges and dignity of the Chief Justice. It had been said, Mr. Basu proceeded, that the Administrator-General and the Official Trustee were appointed by the Local Government and the provision had been defended on that ground but in fact those officers exercised no judicial function.

Replying, Sir *Brojendra* refuted the statement of Mr. Basu that the Administrator-General exercised no judicial function. On the contrary he performed many functions of the law court. Moreover the Local Government were making such judicial appointments like those of Judges of Small Cause Court and Presidency Magistrates. No question of dignity was involved therein. The decision had been reached after consultation with the High Court who had no objection in the appointment of an Official Assignee being made by the Local Government. It had been, in fact, included in the provision that the High Court would be consulted when the appointment would be made.

Mr. Basu's motion being lost the measure was passed without any modification.

The Hon'ble Sir John Woodhead moved that a sum of Rs. 1,65,500 be granted under the head of "Loans and Advances by Provincial Governments" in 1936-37 for granting advances to the detenus who had been receiving industrial training. It was granted. The Council then adjourned till the 30th.

#### AIDS TO PRODUCTIVE INDUSTRIES

**30th. NOVEMBER:—**On the motion of Nawab Sir *K. G. M. Farouki*, Minister for Industries, the Council unanimously adopted to-day the Government's proposal to make an agreement with the company to be established with the object of providing means of affording financial facilities to persons setting up or carrying on business (particularly of small industries) in Bengal who satisfy the company that they are not in a position to obtain financial facilities from any other sources.

The Council also approved a further proposal that if the said company undertakes to afford such financial facilities to persons trained under the detenus' training scheme, the Government might agree with the company to pay fully the amount of any losses of capital incurred by the company in making loans to such persons.

Explaining the objects of the proposal, the Minister said that the company with whom the Government would enter into an agreement would be registered under the Indian Companies Act. To inspire the confidence of investing public, the Government decided to contribute a sum of not exceeding a lakh of rupees towards the running expenses of the said company and offer a guarantee to the extent of five lakhs for recoupment of any losses of capital that might be incurred in respect of advances made to approved applicants. The financing of detenus also would be made part of the general scheme for extension of credit facilities to deserving small industries. The function of the company would be to maintain an organisation for the purchase of raw materials as also for the sale and marketing of finished products turned by these undertakings. In short, the company would have to act as the guide, philosopher and friend of its clients to be indirectly entrusted with the responsibility of furthering the industrial progress of the province.

#### NON-AGRICULTURAL LANDS ASSESSMENT BILL (CONTD.)

**1st. DECEMBER:—**Contrary to expectation very little serious opposition was offered to the Bengal Non-Agricultural Lands Assessment Bill, when Sir *Brojendra Lal Mitter* presented in the Council the report of the Select Committee on the Bill. The attendance was unusually thin and little enthusiasm was evidenced among the non-official members. A large number of amendments were not moved. Those which were moved were mostly rejected without division and in cases where division was demanded the motions were defeated by an overwhelming majority. Altogether 3 clauses were disposed of during the day.

Moving the Bill as reported by the Select Committee, Sir *B. L. Mitter* pointed out that the Bill did not deal with lands which were permanently settled, but only with temporarily settled estates. The provisions of the Bill did not apply to agricultural lands which were governed by the Bengal Tenancy Act. The Hon'ble Member emphasised the fact that it was in no way a taxation measure. It did not seek to impose fresh taxation as was apprehended in certain quarters. On the contrary the

Bill merely provided a machinery for the purpose of assessing revenue in respect of non-agricultural lands.

The regulation of 1882, proceeded Sir Brojendra Lal, provided for reassessment of lands which had once been assessed. But the matter in which the assessment was to be carried out had not been laid down. Government had got lands scattered all over the province and these lands were settled by Collectors of various districts. If no definite principles were laid down for the guidance of the Collectors the risk was that assessment might be made on different basis. And it was only for the purposes of laying down a principle of uniform assessment that the Bill had been put forward. The Government were not going to interfere with the relationship existing between tenants and their sub-tenants, leaving them absolutely free in their mutual dealings. Government, the speaker went on, would assess on the same principle which a prudent owner would adopt in respect of his land, that is, they would only charge moderate rents which would not be oppressive to the tenants. Government were prepared to make certain generous concessions where they were called for. The Bill had provided concessions to be made to good house-holders and in cases where lands had been leased to persons for residential purposes. Concluding, Sir B. L. Mitter said that even on the previous occasion when the Bill was under discussion he was going to announce these concessions to the House, but as the election fever was at that time high the members of the Council were not in a mood to listen to him.

The agenda contained a motion to be moved by Sir B. L. Mitter which sought to exclude land in the Wari Government Estate in the District of Dacca from the scope of the measure but the motion was not eventually moved.

**2nd. DECEMBER :—**Resuming the consideration of the Bill to-day the Council dealt with as many as twenty-seven amendments tabled in the agenda passing six of its clauses which were mainly of technical character.

Discussion was desultory and confined to the movers of amendments and the Member in charge of the Bill or his secretary. Only on one occasion poll was demanded which related to the motion of Rai Bahadur *Satyendra Kumar Das* seeking to exclude the provision that in estimating a fair and equitable rent the Revenue officer should take into consideration the market value of the land to be assessed existing at the time when the order for survey was made. The motion was rejected by 52 to 25 votes.

Certain important modifications were made in a few of the clauses. It was recommended by the Select Committee that while estimating a fair and equitable rent the Revenue officer should, among other things, take into consideration the rent which would be payable if the rate were fixed at not more than two per cent of the market value. By a motion of Sir B. L. Mitter four per cent was substituted for two per cent.

Babu *Premhari Barma's* motion for providing that rent settled thus by the Revenue officer should not be enhanced during a period of not less than thirty years was accepted by the Government.

Mr. P. Banerjee sought to include by a motion the provision that in considering the rents generally paid by the tenants in the vicinity such rents as were fixed under abnormal circumstances should be left out of consideration. But as Sir Brojendra Lal pointed out that the safeguard proposed had already been provided in a previous section against assessment being made on the basis of rent fixed under abnormal circumstances, Mr. Banerjee withdrew his motion. The council then adjourned.

**3rd. DECEMBER :—**Almost all the amendments put forward by non-official members were rejected. Only a few which proposed only minor changes were accepted by the Government. The House then passed the Bill.

#### DEMANDS UNDER GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The Bill having been passed, the House took up the consideration of supplementary demands for grant by the Government. The Hon'ble Sir *Robert Reid* moved that a sum of Rupees 2,00,000 be granted under the head General Administration in 1936-37 in connection with the establishment of the Debt Conciliation Board in various districts of this province.

With a view to raising a discussion on the method of formation of Debt Conciliation Boards and the wishes of the people in this respect, Moulvi *Md. Sadeque* moved a cut motion. Mr. Sadeque complained that the creditors were appointed as members

of the boards, and there being very few representatives of debtors on the boards the purpose for which the boards were set up would be frustrated.

The Hon'ble *Khowaja Sir Nasimuddin* suggested that if there were any cause of complaint with regard to the Debt Conciliation Boards, the complaint should forthwith be made to the Executive officers like the S. D. O. or the Magistrates. So long as the system of nomination of members would prevail there would be such complaints. He pleaded that the Boards should first be given a fair trial. The out motion was rejected.

#### DEMANDS UNDER CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT

The Hon'ble *Nawab Sir Mohiuddin Faruqi* then moved that a sum of Rs. 1,70,000 be granted for expenditure under the minor head "Co-operative Credit." In the Co-operative Credit movement, said Sir Mohiuddin in putting forward the demand, the Provincial Bank occupied a pivotal position. The bank had received a severe setback in 1930 as a result of the collapse of the jute sale movement, which inflicted a loss of about Rs. 22 lakhs on the bank. To meet the situation Government came to the assistance of the bank by a guarantee of cash credit of 30 lakhs. In demanding the present grant the Government had two objects in view. The first object was to put the bank in the way of liquidating the Rs. 24 lakhs and the second object was at the same time to put the bank as regards its revenue income in a position similar to that which it would have occupied if it had now at its command substantial realised reserve, the income on which it could use in reducing rates of interest charged to its debtors.

The method which Government would recommend was the subvention of Rs. 2 lakhs annually for a period of 12 years. Government considered that a substantial reduction in the rates charged from actual borrower was essential if the co-operative movement was to re-establish on a firm footing. So long as the Provincial Bank was unable to reduce its rates it would be retarding the grant to the cultivators of concessions which would bring his interest rates down from their present high figure. The yearly subvention, continued the speaker, of Rs. 2 lakhs for 12 years would allow for employment of as much as Rs. 60,000 annually in the furtherance of the policy of bringing down interest charges. This step, *Nawab Faruqi* expected, would tend to a great extent to ease the economic position of the members of the village co-operative societies, make their investments mobile and revitalise the entire co-operative movement. Out of the subsidy for this year, concluded the speaker, Rs. 30,000 would be found by re-appropriation from savings under the grant made by the Council in connection with the expansion of departmental staff. The supplementary grant asked for is to supply the balance of Rs. 1,70,000.

*Mr. W. C. Wordsworth* and *Mr. J. N. Banu* congratulated the Hon'ble Minister on the proposed scheme. The demand was voted by the House and the House adjourned.

#### AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE

**24th DECEMBER**—The only business which the Council was called upon to do on this day was a demand for a token grant of rupee one moved by *Nawab Sir Mohiuddin Faruqi* for expenditure on the construction with the scheme for the establishment of an Agricultural Institute at Danulpur in the district of Khulna. The object of the scheme is to find a partial solution to the problem of middle class unemployment and providing means for the development of the countryside. The scheme aims at affecting a closer touch between educational institutions and the practical side of rural life and enabling the trained men to start agricultural enterprises of their own either individually or co-operatively or to find employment in private subsidiary estates. The Institute will impart higher education in agriculture. The course of the study will be two years. Admission will be open to students who have completed the science course for the I. Sc. examination. It is proposed to provide for the training of 50 students per annum. The course of training will include both theoretical and practical agriculture. Special attention will also be given to marketing particularly co-operative marketing. The estimate of the scheme will involve a capital outlay of Rs. 200,000 and recurring expenditure Rs. 25,000. The demand was passed.

#### HOUSEWIFE SOCIETY

Specialist expenditure of £10,000 and £10,000 respectively, on what, on each occasion, were made by the members of the Council, the Leader of the House of members of the Council. In their capacity of the services which the Bengal Legislative Council has this assembly has been, confined to this province, the speaker, different, while, there is no doubt made, to well introduction of controversial topics but these

was, on occasions, a rift in the lute. The Council, in the estimate of its President, had been during these years a nursery of constitutionalism, discipline and patriotism.

Dr. N. C. Sen Gupta, who spoke on behalf of the Opposition, however, indulged in some plain-speaking. It was his opinion that during these long years they had ploughed in the sands reaping a permanent harvest of futility. The achievements of the Council according to him was very meagre.

Mr. J. N. Basu, like a good moderate, struck a middle course. He would not desire to refer to the work which this legislature had done, but nevertheless he would always hope for the best and pray that his countrymen might be worthy of better times.

A cautious Englishman, Mr. Eric Stnd, declined to form at the very moment a full estimate of the work which had been done by the Council. But, he was sure, that it had been laying one of the foundation stones of the 'biggest constitutional experiment in this province.

#### GOVERNOR'S FAREWELL SPEECH

At half past twelve when the business was over the Council was adjourned. His Excellency *Sir John Anderson* then addressed the members of the House. After thanking them for their co-operation in the difficult times during his term of office, His Excellency said :—

"You have been assailed for your support of the Executive in enacting measures to deal effectively with organised disorder and terrorism. But you may have the consolation of knowing that thereby you have helped to surmount the greatest obstacle to the political progress in Bengal. In the permanence of this legislation, Bengal has a guarantee for the future that she never enjoyed in the past. Let us be under no illusion about this. It is only because the gangster and the gun-man have been brought under control that Bengal is now in a position to march in step with other Provinces of India on the path to Responsible Government. There can be no such things as free elections or a democratic government in a country that tolerates the rule of the political gangster and if men believe in free institutions they need not be ashamed of having the courage to defend them."

Reviewing the achievements of the Bengal Council during the last 16 years since the introduction of the Montford Reforms, His Excellency paid a handsome tribute to the part played by Deshabandhu C. R. Das in the Council. His Excellency said : "For the most part, the composition and complexion of this Provincial Legislature were conditioned by political developments transcending the scope of purely provincial affairs and the death of late C. R. Das removed from the field of the Provincial Politics a strong personality who, whatever may be said of his previous negative attitude, had begun to conceive the idea of not merely of a constructive as opposed to destructive opposition but even an active co-operation."

The Council was then *prorogued* by order of His Excellency.

# The Bombay Legislative Council

Autumn Session—Poona—7th. September to 7th. October 1936

## MATCH FACTORY STRIKE

The first day of the autumn session of the Bombay Legislative Council met at Poona on 7th. September 1936. After formal business Mr. *Bathale* moved permission of the House for an adjournment motion to consider the question of the unsatisfactory attitude of the Resident Magistrate at Kalyan towards workers on strike in the match factory at Ambernath.

The *Home Member* opposed it on the ground that the matter might come up before law courts and it was not desirable for the House to discuss the motion of adjournment. Leave was refused for the motion.

## DR. MUNICIPALITIES AMEND. ACT

The House then passed the second and third readings of the Bombay District Municipalities Amendment Act to make it legally possible for municipalities to recover arrears and then adjourned.

## FAMINE RELIEF IN BOMBAY

8th. SEPTEMBER :—An adjournment motion to discuss the "unsatisfactory and inadequate measures" taken by the Government for relief of famine conditions in parts of the presidency was carried without division in the Council. The motion was brought forward by Mr. *Patel* and was supported by the Non-Brahmin group.

Mr. *Cooper*, Revenue Member, opposing said that the motion was premature. Referring to the Government communiqué issued on the subject he pointed out that the Government had taken necessary steps to relieve drought. They were watching the situation and every possible relief would be given in time.

Other speakers criticised the "wait and see policy" of the Government and declared that relief should be timely and immediate. They urged that the Government should open relief centres, cattle camps etc. The Government had allotted two lakhs of rupees which was not enough to meet fully the situation, for which at least fifty lakhs of rupees would be necessary.

Closure was applied and the motion was put to vote and carried amidst applause, the Government not challenging a division. The Council then adjourned.

## OFFICIAL BILLS

9th. SEPTEMBER :—Mr. *Cooper*, Finance Member, read out telegrams stating that heavy rains had fallen in Gujrat and good rain in Ahmednagar District. The news was greeted with applause.

The Council then continued consideration of official Bills. After discussion consideration of the Bill to amend the Bombay Local Boards Act was postponed till the next week by 39 votes to 15.

## PARSI TRUSTS REGISTRATION BILL

14th. SEPTEMBER :—After some discussions turning down several amendments, the House passed the second reading of the Parsi Trusts Registration Bill moved by Dr. *Gilder*. The House then adjourned.

## DEBT CONCILIATION BOARDS BILL

15th. SEPTEMBER :—The Council referred to a select committee the Debt Conciliation Boards Bill moved by Mr. *V. N. Patil*.

Although there were differences of details, all sections of the House agreed to the principle for making provision for relief of the agriculturists.

Khan Bahadur *Cooper*, Revenue and Finance Member, said that the Government accepted the principle suggested with reference to the Select Committee.

Earlier, the House passed the third reading of the of the *Gilder's Parsi Trusts Bill*,

## THE ELECTORAL ROLL—ADJ. MOTION

16th. SEPTEMBER.—The Council rejected by 19 votes to 39, Dr. *B. G. Vad's* (University) adjournment motion to discuss the Government's alleged narrow interpretation of the rules which disenfranchised many persons in the University consti-

tenacy. Dr. Vad declared that the Government was not fair to the University constituency in which many graduates were penalised and he urged the Government to interpret the rules in spirit and not in letter.

Mr. B. D. Cooper, Finance Member, opposed the motion on the ground that to ask the Government to make alterations now was out of the question. The Government could not go counter to the order-in-Council.

Mr. Garrett, Chief Secretary to the Government, pointed out that alterations in the electoral list were not possible now except by the revising authority.

The motion was pressed to a division and lost.

The House then resumed discussion on Mr. Bakhale's Bill seeking modification of the Government's powers over co-operative societies, which was not finished when the House adjourned.

#### GOVT. & CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

**17th. SEPTEMBER :—**An adjournment motion to criticise the Government's action in intervening in the work of the Karnatak Co-operative Central Bank at Dharwar by appointing a new board was turned down by the Council to-day, when the House refused leave to Mr. R. B. Soman (Congress) to move an adjournment motion to discuss the matter.

The 15 supporters of the adjournment included Mr. T. S. Kennedy (European group) who opined that a useful convention might be established that before taking such action, the Government might invite public opinion.

The House later rejected by 44 votes to 16, Mr. Bakhale's motion, seeking modification of the Government's powers over co-operative societies.

Discussion was not finished over Rao Saheb Kulkarni's motion on a similar subject when the House adjourned.

#### OPIMUM CONTROL BILL

**18th. SEPTEMBER :—**Some brisk work was done by the Council to-day, which considered as many as four bills, passing two through the three reading stages.

The Bill to control the practice of opium smoking and suppress dens in the Bombay City, introduced by Dewan Bahadur Kamblī, passed the first reading.

#### LUNACY ACT AMEND. BILL

The House earlier passed the Indian Lunacy Act Amendment Bill in its application to the presidency and also Bombay City Municipal Act Amendment Bill, lowering the franchise qualification in the City.

#### THE TOBACCO BILL

After some discussion, the House threw out by 27 votes to 13 Rao Saheb Kulkarni's motion seeking amendment of the Tobacco Act rules. The House then adjourned till the 21st.

#### THE LOCAL BOARDS ACT AMEND. BILL

**21st. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council spent the entire sitting to-day on consideration of the Amendment of the Bombay Local Boards Act and discussing amendments thereto with a view to widening the franchise.

Sir Ali Mahomed Khan Delhavi, Minister of Local Self-Government, moved a comprehensive amendment meeting the wishes of the House.

Rao Bahadur Bole moved an amendment proposing adult franchise for local bodies. Discussion had not finished when the House rose.

**22nd. SEPTEMBER :—**After debating for nearly three days and rejecting to-day four amendments, the Council accepted the Government's amendment with a view to widening the franchise and bringing the same into line with the new Assembly franchise.

Rao Bahadur Bole's amendment proposing adult franchise was rejected by 27 votes to 46, while Mr. Surve's amendment seeking to give adult franchise to Scheduled Classes was thrown out by 17 votes to 42. The House threw out two other amendments and passed the second reading of the same Bill and then adjourned.

**23rd. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council passed the third reading of the Bill to-day. The Bill was opposed by Non-Brahmins on the ground that widening of the franchise would increase the number of voters belonging to the advanced community and militate against scheduled classes.



## OPIMUM CONTROL BILL (CONTD.)

After discussion, the House passed the Local Boards Act Amend. Bill and took up the second reading of the Bill to control opium smoking in Bombay City. Discussion had not finished when the House adjourned.

**24th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Bill to control opium smoking in Bombay City passed the second and third readings to-day in the Council, which discussed the same for nearly a week.

## PREVENTION TO ANIMAL CRUELTY BILL

The House also passed the Bill the object of which was to prevent unnecessary cruelty to animals. The Bill empowered police to order detention of animals in a dispensary or suitable place till produced in court.

## SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

**26th. SEPTEMBER :—**To-day's sitting of the Council was taken up with the supplementary demands. The House voted three grants in connection with medical relief in the Presidency, the most important being the grant for the prevention of plague. For the systematic destruction of rats through local agencies in the plague-infected districts, the House agreed to grant Rs. 11,250 for a medical officer, staff, etc.

Demands of Rs. 4,350 for the reconstruction of the Thana Hospital, Rs. 1,872 to meet the extra cost of ward boys, ayahs and the purchase of the necessary drugs for the special department and treatment of venereal diseases in the J. J. Hospital, Bombay, were also granted.

**28th. SEPTEMBER :—**In the Council to-day, in answer to a question by Mr. *Bakhar*, Sir *Alimohamed Khan Delhavi* said that the creeds professed by parties in the Belgaum District Board had no influence on the nomination of commissioner by the Government.

The discussion on the grant of Rs. 3,625 for the appointment of epidemic medical officers was then resumed. It was proposed to have a permanent staff under the Public Health Department in those districts where epidemics occurred year after year. Khan Bahadur *Abdul Latif* said that his district contained places where they had plague all the year round and often cholera. The provision of one medical man therefore would not be sufficient for his area.

The Minister for Local Self-Government thought that the Government could carry out the scheme more efficiently than local boards though he hoped the time was not far distant when such duties would have to devolve on these bodies. The grant was passed.

The next demand for Rs. 975 to provide subsidies from December to private medical practitioners in selected rural areas was also passed. Each of such medical men will be in charge of three or four villages which he will be expected to visit on specified days of the week.

Mr. *Soman* appealed for support for Indian systems of medicine. Mr. *Boyle* inquired if the Government would have any control over these men. The Minister replying, said that the general idea was to bring properly qualified men from cities to rural areas. They would be paid Rs. 50 a month and would be allowed private practice.

No one, least of all the Government, was against the Indian systems of medicine but they required properly qualified men and it was difficult to select the right men from a group that also included *sadhus* and quacks. He hoped that later the Government would establish colleges for proper training of men in these systems.

The House agreed to a demand for Rs. 5,350 for the establishment for two additional High Court Judges.

Mr. *Kulkarni* complained that out of 365 days more than 100 were spent by the High Court in holidays. He wanted Saturdays to be made full working days and the administrative work to be given to some capable man. Mr. *C. N. Patel* thought that the remedy lay in establishing more civil courts in Bombay. He considered that High Court Judges had plenty of work and needed all their holidays including Saturdays. The Home Member, replying, said that about three or four years ago the Government had come to the conclusion that city courts were not necessary and the idea was now dead. The House at this stage adjourned till the 30th.

**30th. SEPTEMBER :—**The roads policy of the Bombay Government was explained in the Council to-day, when a demand for Rs. 1,60,000 was made for modernising certain roads in Poona.

Members wanted to know the Government's policy regarding the road fund of Rs. 40 lakhs.

Sir *Ali Mahomed Khan Dehlawi*, speaking at length, pointed out the Government of India's attitude towards the question and said that before the Government of India could allot grants, provinces must adopt a policy which tended to bring more revenue to railways. He hoped to bring round the Government of India to the needs of the Province.

Another important supplementary grant voted to-day was a demand for Rs. 5,000 made by Sir *Robert Bell* for the supply of wireless equipment to the police of Bombay City. The Government proposed to start the experiment of using wireless, as it had been found that the telephone and motor transport break down sometime during communal riots and widespread industrial disturbances.

**1st. OCTOBER :—**After some discussion, the Council voted to-day Khan Bahadur *Cooper's* demand for grant of Rs. 10 lakhs for agricultural relief. Of the amount, Rs. 7 and a half lakhs were to cover the anticipated requirements of *topsi* advances for Deccan, Gujarat and Karnatak agriculturists and Rs. 2 and a half lakhs as loan to the Thakor of Amod on security of talukdari lands to defray the debt incurred by his predecessors.

Sir *Robert Bell* moved for a demand of Rs. 2 lakhs for construction of roads and drains in the Back Bay Reclamation area, which was granted.

#### FAMINE RELIEF FUND BILL

**2nd. OCTOBER :—**The bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Famine Relief Fund in the presidency passed three readings in the Council to-day.

The *Finance Member* dwelt on the necessity for the fund, as the present one would cease to exist after the new India Act, and the money would merge with general finances.

The *Finance Member* said that the minimum balance of the Fund would be Rs. 63 lakhs, as recommended by the Public Accounts Committee. A suggestion to increase the minimum balance to Rs. 75 lakhs was negatived.

#### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES AMEND. BILL

**3rd. OCTOBER :—**A Bill amending the Weights and Measures Act passed all the three readings to-day in the Council without much discussion. This Bill which was the last Government Bill during the dyarchy was introduced by Sir *M. K. Dehlawi* the object of which was to authorise certain local bodies to stamp weights and measures and levy fees.

The House then considered, on the motion of the *Finance Member*, the *Finance Committee's* report. Discussion was not finished when the House adjourned to meet on the 5th.

#### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT

**5th OCTOBER :—**The Council discussed the Public Accounts Committee's report for 1934-35 and rejected Rao Sahib *Kulkarni's* amendment that the House should not approve the Government's appropriation account.

Mr. *Kulkarni*, criticising the Government on its debt position, said that it left the Presidency in a bad way. He accused the Government of over-budgeting though retrenchment was the avowed policy, resulting in some departments being starved.

Sir *Robert Bell*, Home Member, said that if members worked to within 10 per cent of their own domestic budgets as the Bombay Government had done, they would have reason to congratulate themselves.

Khan Bahadur *D. B. Cooper*, Finance Member, said that over-budgeting was due partly to the fact that land revenue was not capable of expansion. Excise revenue was showing a downward trend and in spite of all the Government's efforts, expenditure was rising.

#### DISTRICT MUNICIPAL ACT AMEND. BILL

**6th. OCTOBER :—**The Council rejected to-day Rao Bahadur *Parulekar's* Bill to amend the Bombay District Municipal Act to provide a scheme of joint octroi collection. Sir *A. M. K. Dehlawi*, opposing, pointed out that the matter might be left to the new Government. The House then adjourned till the next day, the 7th. October, when after some formal business the Council was prorogued by order of his Excellency the Governor.

# The U. P. Legislative Council

Winter Session—Lucknow—3rd. November to 4th. December 1936

## ENQUIRY INTO WORKING OF SUGARCANE RULES

The last session of the U. P. Legislative Council before its impending dissolution commenced at Lucknow on the 3rd. November 1936 with a thin non-official attendance.

The major part of the day was devoted to the discussion of the resolution moved by Babu Ham Bahadur Saksena urging the appointment of a committee to enquire into the working of sugarcane rules in general and the prices of sugarcane fixed by Government in particular.

The mover in an able and well-reasoned speech emphasized that the existing rules were too harsh so far as the factory owners were concerned, while the cane-growers did not secure adequate return for their crop on account of the prices fixed by Government.

As the resolution related to one of the major industries of the province it naturally evoked a lengthy debate and almost all the members who spoke supported it. The Minister for Education, speaking on behalf of Government, admitted that the rules were not perfect and Government had only given effect to the unanimous conclusions arrived at between cane-growers and sugar manufacturers at the conferences convened in the last three years. As the rules for the current sugar season had already been issued, he thought that enquiry by a committee at this time would serve no useful purpose. The resolution was carried *nem con.*

## REMISSIONS IN REVENUE AND RENT

The second resolution urged the relaxation of rules governing remission in revenue and rent owing to the recent floods and excessive rains.

Sir Joseph Clay, Finance Member, made a sympathetic speech in reply, pointing out that the final orders of the Government would be passed in a month after the receipt of full reports from all the districts which had suffered in the recent floods. He gave figures of the amounts already granted by Government for the relief of the distressed people in various divisions and added that a full statement would be published in reply to the question that had been tabled by the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Chintamani.

All sections of the House felt assured that the Government realized the vast magnitude of the recent flood disaster and the enormous losses suffered by the people. The resolution was accepted by the Finance Member and the Council adjourned.

## NEW AVENUES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

The Secretary to the Industries Department next placed before the Council a statement showing the action taken by Government on the report of the United Provinces Unemployment Committee. The statement covers the stage reached by each of the schemes undertaken up to the end of October, 1936.

Sixteen students were selected for practical training in agriculture but only 13 have actually joined farms. Seven others will be selected by the Director of Agriculture from among applicants and students of the Agricultural College.

The scheme for instruction in estate management has been held up owing to the fact that no changes in the Cawnpore Agricultural College curriculum can be made without the approval of Agra University. The question of fitting in such instruction with ordinary tutorial work is under examination.

Three students for a two-year course for a dairying diploma have been selected and are under training at the Agricultural Institute in Nainital and the selection for a six-month course in organized supply of milk and milk products will be made before that course is due to begin.

The syllabus for training in organized supply of eggs, poultry, etc., has been drawn up and the selection of suitable candidates desirous of undergoing training is expected to be completed soon.

Students have been selected for deputation for veterinary training. Six centres of agricultural improvement in canal areas have been set up and work has been started.

As regards medical relief a district health scheme has been extended to four and three travelling dispensaries have been revived. Some of the rural areas to receive grants have been selected. An additional grant has been placed at the disposal of the Board of Indian Medicine and applications have been invited from promising medical graduates and licentiates willing to settle down to medical practice in rural areas.

Under heads not involving additional expenditure a committee under the chairmanship of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has been set up and the secretary has started preliminary work in connexion with educational reorganisation. The Government have issued orders asking the Director of Public Instruction to set up advisory committees charged with duties of advising students as to careers and of endeavouring to find employment for former students of the institution. The question of reform of legal education is under examination in consultation with universities.

#### NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

**4th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council disposed of three non-official resolutions to-day.

*Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh* moved the suspension of enforced enhancement in rates of irrigation in the area served by the Sarda Canal. The Finance Member opposed the resolution as also an amendment which desired to suspend enhancement for two years. The amendment was carried without a division.

*Khan Bahadur Nisarullah*’s resolution for the allotment of four days for discussion of the Hidayat Moslem Waqf Bill was agreed upon.

A resolution notified by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani to establish advisory councils in districts to assist collectors as proposed by the decentralization commission and as recommended by the United Provinces Legislative Council in 1923, was moved by *Rao Krishnopal Singh* and though opposed by Government it was passed without a division.

#### OFFICIAL BILLS

**5th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed the U. P. Cotton Pest Control Bill, as reported by the select committee, the U. P. Famine Relief Fund Bill, and the Bill amending rules made under the U. P. Encumbered Estates Act, 1934.

Three amendments moved to the Famine Relief Fund Bill were rejected. *Rao Krishnopal Singh* moved an amendment to the effect that the balance out of the fund not used by Government be invested in the provincial Land Mortgage Bank, to be available to agriculturists. He wanted the Finance Member not to bind the hands of the next Government.

The Finance Member, opposing, said that under the rule made by the Secretary of State the Government were precluded from investing money except in securities with the Government of India.

*Mr. Brijendra Prasad* moved an amendment that if there should be a slump in prices, help would be given from this fund.

*Rai Rajeshwari Prasad* proposed an amendment to this amendment—that help should be given if there is a slump in the prices of agricultural products. As already stated, all the amendments were lost.

The House next passed the *U. P. Regulation of Sales (Amendment) Bill*.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS

After lunch, the Finance Member presented the demand for supplementary grants under the head "Interest on Debt" in the financial year 1936-37. *Rai Govind Chandra* objected to the payment of Rs. 1,200 to the Reserve Bank as commission for management of loans. On a division, only seven voted for the objection while the entire Government block opposed.

The House voted demands for excess grants relating to the financial year 1934-35 and supplementary grants under heads Public Health, Interest on Debt and Land Revenue for the financial year 1936-37. The Council then adjourned.

#### U. P. UNDERGROUND WATERS BILL

**6th. NOVEMBER :—**Contrary to expectation the remaining official business was not finished in to-day’s Council and consequently the non-official resolutions could not be discussed.

In asking for leave of the House to withdraw the United Provinces Underground Waters Bill introduced in the Council on June 29, 1936 and circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon, Sir Joseph Clay, Finance Member, spoke with unusual animation and warmth in justification of this measure and sought to throw responsibility on the Council for any eventualities that might occur in future in respect of underground water supply. He characterised as extremely unfair the criticisms that this bill was an attempt to establish Government monopoly of underground waters and that it was an unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the subject and the constitutional rights of the zamindars.

'Confiscation without compensation' was the apt description of the bill given by the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Chintamani, at the time the Bill was first introduced at Nainital and to-day he recalled his criticism that Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru would be foremost to be grateful to Government for proposing to give legislative effect to the confiscatory principle underlying the bill. He congratulated the Finance Member personally on the animation and warmth of his speech and as a Member of the Government on the belated wisdom that had dawned upon them.

#### U. P. STATE TUBEWELLS BILL

After this bill was allowed to be withdrawn, the Finance Member introduced the United Provinces State Tubewells Bill which was referred to a select committee on the motion of Mr. Chintamani. The bill only sought to apply certain provisions of the Northern India Canal and Drainage Act of 1873 to the administration of state tubewells and was of a very non-contentious nature. It was, therefore, expected that the select committee will not take more than an hour or two and the committee was asked to report by Monday so that the bill might be passed into law during this session.

#### PREPARATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES VOLUME

There was something like a storm in the tea cup owing to the mistake of the Finance department in the preparation of the volume of supplementary estimates.

The House having passed a resolution in June last recommending to the Government not to spend the allotment (voted in the budget session) of Rs. 10,000 for rendering financial assistance for the education of Indian Christians 'whose origin among the depressed classes', it looked strange, that the Education Minister's token demand of ten rupees to enable the sum already voted to be spent was again printed both under the very heading which raised a storm of protest both in March and June.

A point of order was raised by Shaikh Habibullah that the House could not rediscuss a resolution raising substantially the same question within six months. The Education Minister explained that he had fully carried out the wishes of the House in this matter and it was the mistake of the Finance department that the same heading was repeated in the memorandum of the supplementary estimates.

The point of order was ruled out as the Minister agreed to delete the objectionable words 'whose origin is among the depressed classes'.

Shaikh Habibullah then moved for omission of the token demand but the House rejected his motion as the Education Minister had fully met the objection raised in June last. The discussion of the supplementary estimates had not concluded when the Council adjourned.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

**7th. NOVEMBER :—**The achievements of the present constitution with its defects and compromises during the last 15 years were enumerated by his Excellency Sir Harry Baig addressing the council for the last time this morning.

The most striking advance achieved, His Excellency said, had been perhaps in the sphere of education which had absorbed the greater part of the increased resources which the province had obtained under the present Constitution.

Referring to agriculture, the Governor said that the Department had passed beyond the stage of mere research and investigation to that of demonstration and propaganda and the results of research were being brought home to the cultivator in the fields.

The progress of irrigation during the period had been one of the most remarkable features in the life of the province.

His Excellency said that in no comparable period of the past had so much been done to promote the stability of rural economic structure and expressed the belief that the policy of the rural development movement was like laying the foundation for a new life in the villages and a great advance in the happiness, intelligence and

prosperity. The policy of the Government had been to increase the stability of tenure of a tenant, to ensure that he was protected over reasonable periods from enhancement of rent. Throughout the duration of the Constitution the Government had devoted a great deal of attention to the endeavour to expand industrial activity and to establish new industries in the province.

Referring to the new Constitution, the Governor said that there could be no question of the elections being a struggle between the Government and the people. Contest between parties reflect the main tendencies existing in the province. "We presume," His Excellency said, "that any party which goes to the electorate with promises of what it will do, intends, if returned with a majority, to try to carry out those promises through the Constitution, that is, by forming a Government and working it in a constitutional way.

"It is sometimes cast up against those who are participating in these elections, that they are seeking office. There is nothing discreditable in this. On the contrary, it would be those who might seek to use the majority not for the purpose of forming a Government and taking office, but for the purpose of promoting unconstitutional activity who would have to answer at the bar of public opinion."

Dealing with the financial position, the Finance Member said :—

"We paid back an additional lakh towards our debt to the Provincial Loans Fund and we spent Rs. 2 lakhs on rural development out of the grant received from the Government of India.

"On the other hand, we advanced to local bodies and other borrowers Rs. 3 lakhs less than we expected.

"The payment of commuted value of pensions cost us Rs. 3 lakhs less than our estimate, and we spent Rs. 2 lakhs less than we had intended from the Central Road Development account, whilst other heads show a saving of Rs. 1 lakh. Taking all these items together, we obtain a net reduction in our disbursements of Rs. 2 lakhs".

#### THE HIDAYAT MUSLIM WAQF BILL

**9th. NOVEMBER :—**Speaking to-day on the Waqf Bill introduced by Mr. *Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim*, Sir J. P. *Srivastava*, Education Minister, informed the House that hitherto the Select Committee was proceeding on the assumption based on the Iqbal Ahmed Committee report that the total income of Waqfs proposed to be included within the scope of the Bill was in the neighbourhood of Rs. 40,00,000.

Supervising machinery to be set up under the Act, he said, would cost about Rs. 1,00,000 annually. From the figures supplied by the district magistrate it appeared that the total income of both Shia and Sunni Waqfs did not exceed Rs. 3,59,000 and on the basis of contributions fixed by the select committee only a sum of Rs. 17,500 would be at the disposal of the central boards for administrative purposes, which sum the Minister thought was totally inadequate.

Other Moslem members pressed for the passage of the Bill, *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan* pointed out that under Clause IV of the Bill surveyors would have to be appointed to find out the income of Waqfs. He suggested that the Government should not at this stage have opposed the passage of the Bill. If surveyors found enough money not forthcoming for their administration the proposed machinery would not come into existence.

The Minister suggested postponement till the next day with a view to giving the Government time to consider the proposal. To this the House agreed. Other non-official Bills were either rejected or not moved.

#### THE MADH-E-SAHABA AGITATION

**10th. NOVEMBER :—**A tense atmosphere prevailed to-day when numerous questions were addressed to *Kuswar Sir Maharaj Singh*, Home Member, by the Muslim members concerning the orders which were promulgated by the deputy commissioner of Lucknow under sec. 144, Cr. P. C. on every Friday in connection with the *madr-e-sahaba* agitation among the Sunnis.

Failing to get redress of their grievances against the local magistracy, a notice of his intention to move the adjournment of the House was immediately handed over to the President by *Nawabzada Mohd. Liaquat Ali Khan*. The issue raised by the motion was the refusal of the Government to stop the local authorities at Lucknow from interfering in the public recitation of *madr-e-sahaba* which was a legitimate religious right of the Muslims. Objection to the discussion of the motion was raised by the Finance Member on the ground that it was not an urgent matter and by the Home Member on the ground that it might accentuate the ill feeling already existing

between the Sunnis and Shias of Lucknow. The Home Member further stated that a deputation of Muslims was going to wait on his Excellency the Governor on Nov. 14 and appealed to the good sense of the members to await the result.

*Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan* pointed out that arrests were being made on every Friday under sec. 144 and the Muslim feeling was greatly agitated over the matter, whereupon the President considered that there was great force in the contention that it was a matter of continuing grievance and held that the motion was in order.

Exactly at 2-30 the discussion commenced and the motion for adjournment was unanimously carried shortly before 4-30. The Home Member did not challenge a division. The Council then adjourned till the first of December.

#### THE HIDAYAT MUSLIM WAQF BILL (CONTD.)

**1st. DECEMBER :—**A bombshell was thrown upon the Council to-day by *Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava*, Minister for Education, by his statement explaining the attitude of the Government towards the Hidayat Muslim Waqf Bill in which Muslim members were vitally interested with a view to secure better government and administration of certain classes of Muslim Waqfs.

The order paper contained a number of amendments against the name of the hon. Minister to be moved on behalf of the Government, the most important of which related to the appointment of commissioners of Waqfs for the purpose of making a survey of their income.

The other amendments were for the deletion of all remaining clauses in the Bill with the exception of clause 4 providing for the appointment of such commissioners.

The Minister in the course of an elaborate statement emphasized the imperative need of such a survey being made in the first instance, as the figures obtained from district magistrates in respect of 44 districts showed that the two boards could expect to get an income of only Rs. 26,200 against the expected expenditure of at least Rs. 1 lakh.

As the accuracy of the reports received from the district magistrates was assailed by several members, the Government considered it essential to obtain fuller and more reliable information on this subject by instituting a statutory survey of Waqfs conducted through commissioners specially appointed for the purpose with the power to compel the attendance of witnesses for the production of documents, etc. The Minister added that the Government felt that without this data, it was impossible to proceed.

At the conclusion of the Minister's statement, *Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan*, on behalf of Muslim members in the House, moved for the postponement of further discussion on the Bill till the next day so that Muslim members might be able to take stock of the whole situation created by the Minister's statement. The motion for postponement was agreed to and the House adjourned.

**2nd. DECEMBER :—**After prolonged confabulations between *Sir J. P. Srivastava*, Minister for Education, and officials on the one side and Muslim members on the other, between whom a fundamental divergence of opinion had arisen regarding the Muslim Waqfs Bill, the Council met to-day. A statement subsequently made by the Minister showed that as a result of private talks and discussions, an agreement had been reached on many points of difference and he was not going to move the amendments which he had previously tabled but would move certain others instead.

Muslim members from the outset had insisted on the whole bill being passed, whereas the Minister's speech of yesterday unmistakably indicated the Government's opposition to such a course. In fact, the Minister's amendments on the order paper sought to modify clause 4 relating to a statutory survey of the income of Waqfs and delete almost all other clauses.

There has, therefore, been a clear climb-down on the part of the Government owing to the point that the whole Bill and not a part of it should be placed on the statute book in this, the last session of the present Council.

The Muslim members scored a victory not only in their negotiations with the Government but also in the discussion of the Bill in the House. The first test of strength with the Government benches came early in the day over the amendment moved by the Minister excluding from the purview of the Bill all Waqfs whose annual income was less than Rs. 150.

This amendment met with a vigorous opposition from Muslim members who considered that the exclusion of such Waqfs which were by no means negligible in number would strike at the very root of the bill and defeat its primary purpose.

The first division of the session took place over this which was rejected by the House by 29 votes to 23.

The result of the division was most unexpected as almost all Hindu members remained neutral and produced not a little consternation among the Treasury benches.

After disposing of the first ten clauses of the Bill, the Council adjourned.

**3rd. DECEMBER:**—But for one clause on which discussion was postponed till the next day, the consideration of all other clauses in the Muslim Waqfs Bill was concluded to-day.

This clause sought to empower the central boards to realize contributions due to them by distress and sale of movable property and was analogous to the provisions in the Municipal and District Boards Acts relating to the realization of unpaid taxes.

Muslim members including *Saiyid Ali Zaheer*, *Mr. Zahur Ahmad*, *Saiyid Zafer Hossain*, *Shahid Habibullah* and *Haji Gasnafarullah* strongly supported the addition of this new clause and urged that without such powers for the central boards, the Act would in practice become a dead letter, particularly as the House had already agreed to the official amendment that contributions were not to be realized by collectors as arrears of land revenue.

The *Minister for Education* who at first had opposed this clause later agreed to obtain the decision of the Government thereon and the debate was accordingly adjourned.

There were two divisions in the course of the day, in both of which the Government won. The first was in regard to the exclusion of four Shia Waqfs from the purview of the Act, to which the Muslim members expressed their opposition and the second related to the form and not the substance of the amendment moved by the Education Minister regarding the immediate promulgation of certain sections of the Act. Both the amendments over which divisions took place were not considered by Muslim members to be of major importance.

**4th. DECEMBER:**—The Muslim Waqfs Bill was passed into law earlier in the day. Muslim members expressed dissatisfaction that the measure was not passed in the manner they liked but underwent certain changes during the second reading stage in accordance with the terms laid down by the Government.

An important revelation was made by the leader of the Opposition as regards the reason why Hindu members generally took little or no part in the discussion of the bill, which came as a great surprise upon the House. He said that he was at first approached by a spokesman on behalf of the Minister for Education to serve on the select committee and was later asked to withdraw his consent on the ground that Muslim members would not like the presence of Hindu members on the committee.

Referring to the Finance Member's speech *Mr. Chintamani*, on behalf of himself and his party, entirely repudiated responsibility for the ill-advised Special Powers Act. He regretted that the House was not more economical in its approbation of Government than it actually had been. He was glad this 'Long Council' had, at last, come to an end.

Warm tributes were paid to the President by *Sir Joseph Clay*, leader of the House, *Mr. Chintamani*, leader of the Opposition, and leaders of other parties and some other members for his tact, ability, skill and sagacity in conducting the deliberations of the House.

The hope was expressed by all sections of the House that he would come out successful in the coming election and re-elected the first Speaker of the new provincial Legislative Assembly.

The President made a suitable acknowledgment of the personal references made to him.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, the Council was *prorogued* by the President under the orders of H. E. the Governor.



# The C. P. Legislative Council

July Session—Nagpur—29th. July to 6th. August 1936.

## EX-COUNCILLOR'S APPOINTMENT CHALLENGED

The July session of the C. P. Legislative Council commenced at Nagpur on the 27th. July 1936 under the presidency of Sir S. W. A. Rizvi. When the Honourable Mr. Roughton advanced to the presidential seat to take the oath of allegiance, Mr. Kedar, Opposition Leader, raised a point of order saying that he objected to Mr. Roughton's appointment as temporary Member. The President agreed to give time to Mr. Kedar to raise the point of order later on.

Raising the point of order later, Mr. Kedar claimed that Mr. Roughton's appointment was *ultra vires* as the circumstances under which temporary members could be appointed did not exist in Mr. Roughton's case and quoted Section 92 (3) of the India Act in support of his contention. Mr. Kedar submitted that the vacancy did not exist as the permanent incumbent (Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao) was neither infirm nor could he be declared as on special duty, since he was officiating as Governor. Consequently, Mr. Kedar questioned Mr. Roughton's right to sit in the House.

Mr. A. L. Binney, Chief Secretary, submitted that there were precedents for such procedure in Madras and the Punjab. Mr. Parekh enquired when Mr. Roughton's appointment was made. The Chief Secretary said that the appointment was made while Sir Hyde Gowan was Governor, but notified after Mr. Raghavendra Rao assumed office of Governor. Mr. Parekh submitted that no vacancy existed when the appointment was made and as such the appointment was *ultra vires*. The President announced that further discussion on the subject would be resumed on July 29.

The Council adjourned after passing six Government Bills into law. Official legislative business included presentation of the report of the Public Accounts Committee for 1934-1935 by the Hon'ble Mr. G. P. Burton, Finance Member.

## UNEMPLOYMENT ENQUIRY

28th. JULY :—The problem of unemployment took up the major portion of to-day's sitting of the Council, which discussed non-official resolutions. There was four hours' debate on Mr. C. B. Parekh's motion recommending to the Government the appointment of a Committee to investigate unemployment in the province, specially amongst the educated classes and suggest the ways and means to remedy it.

Non-official members, supporting the motion, stressed the acuteness of the problem which was becoming more and more intense every day and enquired why the Government, who, in their view, owed a duty to the public, had not moved so far in the matter. The resolution was carried without division.

Mr. A. L. Binney, Chief Secretary, opposing the motion thought that no useful purpose would be served by the appointment of a committee. Unemployment in the province was not so acute as in other provinces. However, the Government was doing what they could within the financial resources available. He added that the Sapru Committee's report was under consideration of the Government, who would take suitable action on the recommendations applicable to the conditions of the province.

Secretaries to the Government in the Agriculture, Education and Industries Departments narrated the activities of their Departments for giving an industrial bias, imparting primary education and helping the development of industries in the province and also promoting schemes for the benefit of agriculturists.

## CO-OPERATIVE LAND MORTGAGE BANK BILL

29th. JULY :—The Council devoted the whole day to the discussion of Government legislative business. Nine Bills were passed into law.

The hon. Mr. B. G. Khandekar's Central Provinces Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank Bill, as it emerged from the Select Committee, was the first measure to receive assent of the House. The Bill was based on the Madras Co-operative Land Mortgage Banks Act of 1934, with certain modifications and empowered land mortgage banks to effect distraint and sale without intervention of civil courts.

### REDUCTION OF INTEREST BILL

The hon. Mr. J. N. Roughton next presented the report of the Select Committee on the Central Provinces Reduction of Interest Bill framed on the lines of chapter IV of the U. P. Agriculturist Relief Act of 1934. *Seth Shoolai* and other members objected to the exclusion of scheduled banks from the operation of the Bill but the opposition was ineffective and the Bill was agreed to.

### CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMEND. BILL

Mr. N. G. Roughton next moved that the Code of Criminal Procedure (C. P. Amendment Bill) No. 6 of 1936 as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration. The Bill aimed at making personation at elections a cognizable offence, empowering the police officer to arrest any person suspected to be guilty of the offence without a warrant and if necessary to be detained pending enquiry.

Mr. *Mangalmurthi* (Nagpore University) said that the effect of the Bill would be to scare away voters who would be acquiring the right to vote and there was a possibility of the police misusing their power.

Khan Bahadur *Syed Hifazatali* said that at election time feelings usually run high and the Bill would be used with a view to cowing down opponents by certain candidates.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was carried by 35 votes.

### ENTERTAINMENTS DUTY BILL

The House next considered the C. P. Entertainments Duty Bill, the report of the Select Committee on which was presented by the Hon'ble Mr. G. P. Burton. The Bill was based on the Bombay Entertainment Duty Bill of 1923.

Mr. D. T. *Mangalmurthi* opposed consideration of the Bill in view of the present economic condition of the people but the House agreed to consider the Bill by 34 votes to 29.

Rai Bahadur G. P. *Jaiswal* moved two amendments abolishing the tax on two and four anna seats.

Mr. Burton said that abolition of tax on those seats would result in considerable fall in revenue. Those who could not pay tax, which was not heavy, could avail themselves of other entertainments.

Mr. C. B. *Parky*, Rao Sahab *Fulay*, and Rai Bahadur *Dadu Dwarakanath Singh* supported the amendments on the score that poor people should not be taxed.

Mr. *Jaiswal's* first amendment was carried by 43 votes to 14 and the second by 33 votes to 25.

The Bill, as amended by the House, was passed into law.

### ELECTION PERSONATION PREVENTION BILL

While discussion on the Bill for prevention of the offence of personation at elections was under discussion, Khan Bahadur *Syed Hifazatali* moved two amendments urging the deletion of two clauses. The President declared that the amendments were out of order as they amounted to killing the Bill. The member could, if he chose, oppose the clauses but he could not move amendments which aimed at deletion of whole clauses. When the Bill was being put to the final vote of the House, the President enquired if members desired to make any observations. Mr. V. B. *Choubal* immediately rose in his seat and said "The only observation I have to make is that the Bill should not operate as far as immediate elections are concerned." (Laughter.)

After passing five other Government Bills of a formal nature, the House adjourned.

### GIRLS' COMPULSORY EDUCATION BILL

31st JULY :—There was a fair attendance of ladies in the visitors' galleries to-day and they evinced keen interest when the House discussed Mrs. *Ramabai Tambe's* Bill, suggesting to the Government to make primary education compulsory in the case of girls in the province.

Mrs. Tambe declared that local bodies had failed to do [this on financial grounds and, therefore, the Government should strive for the expansion of women's education.

The debate disclosed sharp divergence of opinion among members but the majority supported the Bill.

Mr. M. *Owen*, Education Secretary, opposing the Bill said that on financial grounds the Government could not take this responsibility, which involved expenditure of nearly Rs. 16 lakhs per annum. He pointed out the dearth of trained women teachers who would be necessary if primary education were made compulsory for girls.

While the Government sympathised with the object of the Bill, they could not see their way to agree with the course suggested at present. Further discussion was adjourned till the next day.

Earlier, the House passed the Bill repealing the provisions of the Land Revenue Act whereby the Government could recover arrears of land revenue by the arrest, detention or imprisonment of defaulter in jail by the Government.

**1st. AUGUST :—**When the Council resumed discussion to-day on Mrs. Tambe's Girls' Primary Education Bill, the Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Khapsarde, Education Minister, said that from opinions received it was clear that the majority of local bodies were opposed to asking primary education for girls compulsory and that coercion of these bodies would defeat the very purpose the measure sought to achieve.

Financial stringency, which was even now bad, prevented the Government from taking such a liability. However, they had given partial relief in that grants amounting nearly to Rs. 1,45,000 had been restored to local bodies to be spent for primary education.

Mrs. Tambe made a moving appeal to the House to support the Bill. She declared that compulsory primary education for girls was a necessity at a time when a more democratic form of Government was being ushered in the country and claimed that the Bill would help the agricultural population of the country. She alluded to the Viceroy's recent speech stressing the need for spreading female literacy and remarked that the House should consider, while voting on the Bill, the opinion of an eminent authority, not because he was the Viceroy but who, as Chairman of the Royal Agricultural Commission, extensively toured in India. Mrs. Tambe could not see why there should be any difference between boys and girls in the matter of compulsory primary education and thought that the Government should come forward with sufficient funds if they were in sympathy with female education.

The House dividing, the Bill was thrown out by 27 to 35 votes, some members greeting the result with cries of 'shame, shame'. Mrs. Tambe and ladies from the visitors' galleries who were watching the debate left the hall utterly disappointed.

#### BOARD OF REVENUE BILL

**3rd. AUGUST :—**The Government scored a victory over non-officials in the Council to-day, when on the motion of the Finance Member, the Hon'ble Mr. G. P. Burton, the House agreed to refer to Select Committee, the Board of Revenue Bill by 39 votes to 28. The Bill sought to establish a Board of Revenue in the Province after the introduction of Provincial Autonomy from April 1, 1937 to deal with all revenue appeals.

Oppositionists contended that the High Court of Nagpur could be given powers to deal with revenue matters also and expressed the fear that the Board would be filled by members of the I. C. S., to which the House should not be a party.

The Finance Member emphasised the need for establishing the necessary machinery to dispose of revenue appeals from the date of inauguration of Provincial Autonomy and with this object, he said, the present Bill had been brought forward before the House. Legislation was an absolute necessity and the fears expressed by some members were baseless.

The Government motion was carried.

#### NAGPUR IMPROVEMENT TRUST BILL

The Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Khapsarde, Education Minister, then introduced the Nagpur Improvement Trust Bill. Mr. P. J. H. Stent, Commissioner of Nagpur Division, who had special knowledge of the subject took his seat in the House. Discussion had not concluded when the House adjourned.

#### C. P. HIGHWAY BILL

**4th. AUGUST :—**Legislation implementing the recommendations of the Road Conference of 1931, which drew attention to enforcing of the rule of the road and generally the use of public roads and places in the province, as embodied in the Central Provinces Highway Bill was carried through in the Council to-day. The House, on the motion of the Home Member, the Hon'ble Mr. N. J. Roughton, enacted the Bill into law by 29 votes to 6.

Earlier, the Nagpur Improvement Trust Bill was referred to a Select Committee. Feeble opposition to the measure came from two members who, while recognising

the need for planned improvement, expressed fears that the creation of a trust at present would put on rate-payers an extra burden of taxation.

Mr. C. B. Parakh (Nagpur) thought that agitation against the trust was engineered by a handful of landlords whose interests were likely to be affected. There was ample evidence to prove that an overwhelming majority of public opinion in Nagpur favoured immediate establishment of the trust.

Mr. P. J. B. Stent, Commissioner of Nagpur Division, who was specially nominated to the Council to deal with the subject, counteracted all opposition arguments and vehemently declared that the members of the House had been offered to-day an opportunity of inaugurating a constructive measure of far-reaching importance which would, he confidently predicted, be remembered in gratitude by generations yet to come. Mr. Stent, who spoke with visible emotion, was heard with rapt attention in the House, which threw out a dilatory motion and referred the Bill to a Select Committee without division.

#### LOCAL SELF-GOVT. AMEND. BILL

6th. AUGUST :—The Council devoted the almost entire sitting to-day to a discussion of the Bill to amend the C. P. Local Self-Government Act of 1920 which the Education Minister, Mr. B. G. Khaparde introduced. The Bill was based upon the recommendations of the Committee set up by the Government early this year.

Several members opposed the measure contending that the rights of Local Bodies would be taken away even in the sphere of running normal administration and the official element in these bodies would predominate in as much as the Deputy Commissioner had been invested with wide powers of supervision and control regarding the administration of primary schools, which the Government proposed to transfer from Local Bodies to independent school boards, to be constituted by the Government.

The Minister, replying, explained that the clauses of the Bill were of an enabling nature. Only in cases of such Local Bodies which, despite the Government's warning, persistently failed to discharge their duties properly and wasted public funds, would the provisions of the Bill be applied. The Government could not tolerate any longer the maladministration of some Local Bodies and the legislation sought to improve the position, and was essential to protect the interests of minorities.

A dilatory motion was defeated by 40 votes to 12 and the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

#### LOCAL BODIES IMPROVEMENT BILL

6th. AUGUST :—The Council met to-day, the last day of the present session, and disposed of official and non-official business on the agenda. Seven bills, including one making changes in the working of district councils, local bodies and village panchayats with a view to bringing about improvement suggested by the Local Self-Government Committee in its report and accepted by the Government, were referred to a Select Committee on the motion of the Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Khaparde, Education Minister.

#### C. P. RECOGNISED EXAMINATIONS BILL

The House also sent to the Select Committee the C. P. Recognised Examinations Bill, which was designed to make unauthorised possession of examination papers a punishable offence. The Government undertook this legislation as leakage of question papers had often caused in the past hardship on students and it had been found difficult either to detect the source of leakage or to bring the offender to book, despite strenuous efforts of the authorities concerned.

#### C. P. PROTECTION OF DEBTORS BILL

"The Government appears to be opposed to money-lenders' interests," observed Seth Shoolai, speaking against the C. P. Protection of Debtors Bill, moved by the Home Member, the Hon'ble Mr. N. J. Roughton. The speaker wanted an assurance that no hardships would be inflicted upon the money-lender class. The Bill sought to protect debtors from intimidation and molestation of money-lenders and their hirelings who "rely on violence rather than the processes of law".

The Home Member assured the House that those having honest dealings need not be afraid of the measure as no hardship was likely to be caused to them.

The Government motion for Select Committee was then carried.

## COTTON MIXING BILL

Another important bill which was intended to check the mixing of inferior type of cotton (Garrowhill variety) with superior cotton, which practice was prevalent in a large area in the province and threatened to affect adversely good cotton crop was sent to the Select Committee on the motion of the Minister of Agriculture.

The House then adjourned *sine die*.

## NOVEMBER SESSION—NAGPUR—5th. to 11th. NOV. 1936

## THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

The last session of Central Provinces Legislative Council under the Montford constitution was held at Nagpur on the 5th. November 1936. H. E. Sir Hyde Goswami, Governor, addressing the members observed that it was the sacred duty of everyone regarded as a leader of the people to educate the new electorate, numbering over one and a half millions, in this province. On the way in which they fulfilled that duty, the fate of new structure would depend.

They were entering in India to-day, on the task of building a new democracy at the very time when in the west the old democracies were approaching their hour of trial. When they approach the new voters they should not make high promises and of the coming of that millennium which they knew was not attainable, but on the contrary they should ask voters to return those who would work for the good of the State for "on the quality of our representatives, we will be judged for our capacity to govern ourselves".

His Excellency added that under the new constitution, the Governor's powers were strictly limited and all the real responsibility for the welfare and progress of the province lay upon no other shoulders but their own. He earnestly hoped that they would choose the right path to their salvation, and not one that led to destruction and that the spirit of mutual tolerance and understanding which had gradually developed during the life of the present Council would survive in the new constitution.

His Excellency reviewed the record of beneficial legislation in the past three years and said that the problem of rural indebtedness had been dealt with successfully and agriculturists had been assisted by a series of acts designed to help to make easy the marketing of their produce. Continuing, the Governor remarked, that no one who had observed the work of the first reformed Council and the present one could fail to be struck by two changes. There was a time when the proceedings were marked by bitter and acrimonious attacks on the Government and its Ministers and officials, but now each side had recognised that each in its different way was working for the common good. And a spirit of tolerance and understanding has gradually been developed. The second change, no less important, was the convention of the Ministry working on the principle of joint responsibility which would resign if its followers refused to support it. Sir Hyde thought that much still remained to be learnt about party discipline and the need for stable loyalties, but he felt that the seed of party government had been sown and was bearing fruit already.

His Excellency paid a tribute to the President of the House, Mr. S. W. A. Rizvi, under whose guidance it had established a tradition of dignified and orderly debate and also expressed gratitude to the Home Member, Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao, who as Leader of the House had carried out his trust worthily and brought to their debates knowledge of constitutional law and parliamentary practice which had earned for him a name in places far beyond the walls of that House.

The Governor also referred to the preparations now progressing for the inception of the new constitution, the most important change being the High Court which completed the constitutional structure of the Province.

## THE DEBTOR'S PROTECTION BILL

6th. NOVEMBER :—On the motion of the Home Member, the Council enacted into law to-day the Bill seeking to protect debtors from money-lenders, who rely on threat of violence rather than the process of law.

The measure made molestation and intimidation of debtors punishable with simple imprisonment extending for three months or fine of Rs. 500 or both.

A non-official amendment, which was carried provided that the offence could be compounded with the consent of the trying court.

The House also accepted another Bill making unauthorized possession of examination papers an offence punishable with six months' simple imprisonment or Rs. 1,000 fine or both and then adjourned.

#### CANDIDATES IN THE COMING ELECTION

9th. NOVEMBER :—Mr. Kashiprasad Pande (Sihora) moved an adjournment motion in respect of a circular stated to have been issued by an officer or officers of the Government calling forth information about the candidates contesting the forthcoming elections to the Provincial Assembly and their supporters.

The Hon. Mr. Raghavendra Rao, objecting to the motion, said that the same was not definite nor was it urgent.

The President enquired of Mr. Pande, even assuming that the circular had been issued by any officer, where was the sting in it that gave urgency to the matter? Mr. Pande replied that certain District Superintendents had issued cyclostyled circulars calling information and the enquiry smacked of interference in the directions in view of the fact that the primary elections of the Depressed Classes were approaching near. Mr. Kolhe, intervening, remarked, amidst loud laughter, that the supporters of candidates were getting nervous when the police went to make enquiries.

After some further discussion, the President, relying on the ruling given by the President of the Legislative Assembly on the 16th July, 1931, gave a ruling disallowing the motion on the ground that there was no sting in the motion, that there was considerable vagueness about the officer or officers alleged to have issued the circulars and about their dates; but assuming that one of the circulars was to elicit information about candidates and their supporters, he failed to find how it could be said to be objectionable. Probably, police officers wanted information about candidates and their supporters and the circular may or may not be innocuous, but it was difficult to say that, on the face of it, it was not innocuous. For these reasons, the President did not think he would be justified in admitting the motion.

#### NAGPUR'S WATER SUPPLY

10th. NOVEMBER :—In the Council to-day on the motion of the *Finance Member* the House carried the demand for two and a half lakhs of rupees, Mr. T. J. Kedar, the Opposition Leader, alone raising his voice "No". The sum was to be advanced to the Nagpur Municipality as a loan for launching a scheme to augment the city's water-supply.

The House accepted a resolution moved by Rai Bahadur K. S. Nayudu, Industries Minister, suggesting to the Government a scheme for the establishment of 33 children's dispensaries to be included in the proposals formulated for the utilisation of the Government of India's rural uplift grant.

The Finance Member, the hon. Mr. G. F. Bruntton moved that the Board of Revenue Bill, as reported by the Sub-Committee, be taken into consideration.

Mr. C. B. Parakh, moving a dilatory motion, said that there was no need for the House to rush through this measure. Even if the House passed a Bill, there was no guarantee that the new legislature would accept it. The measure was designed to create a machinery to dispose of the revenue appeals after the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy and for this purpose proposes to establish a Board of Revenue in the Province from April next.

The dilatory motion for recommitting the Bill to the Select Committee was lost by 22 votes to 34. After further discussion, the House accepted Mr. C. B. Parakh's amendment, by 42 votes to 19, recommending that the member of the Board of Revenue shall not be a permanent servant of the Crown, but will be a barrister or pleader practising in the Nagpur High Court, and that his salary will not exceed Rs. 2,000 per annum. As this amendment, which went counter to the main principles of the Bill, was accepted by the House, the Government made no further motion on the Bill.

#### THE C. P. LOCAL GOVT. BILL

The hon. Mr. B. G. Khaparde, the Minister, then presented the C. P. Local Government Bill as reported by the Select Committee. The Opposition Leader, Mr. Kedar, enquired whether the Government would treat the Bill as a non-party measure and

said they would not agree to such a course. Any vital amendment, if carried, would, he added, be treated as a censure vote against the Ministry. Further discussion was adjourned.

#### NAGPUR IMPROVEMENT TRUST BILL

**11th. NOVEMBER** :—There was a dramatic incident in the Council to-day, when about twenty members, headed by Mr. T. J. Kedar, Opposition Leader, staged a "walk out" as a protest against the unconstitutional and illegal manner in which the Government wanted to proceed with official legislative business.

When the House reassembled this morning after Mr. Kedar's statement yesterday, the lobbies were resounding with reports that clouds over the ministry had not been lifted. Government members at the outset presented Select Committee reports on several official bills and introduced new ones.

Thereafter the Hon'ble Mr. B. G. Khaparde, Minister, moved that the report of the Select Committee on the Nagpur Improvement Trust Bill would be taken up for consideration.

Mr. T. J. Kedar, Dr. P. N. Deshmukh and others objected to the motion, contending that the procedure resorted to was unusual in the history of the Council inasmuch as the Minister had made no motion in respect of the Local Self-Government Bill, the Select Committee report on which he had presented yesterday.

The *Home Member* said the order of business had been announced yesterday and according to that the Improvement Trust Bill, which stood first, was being taken up.

Mr. Mangalmurthi wanted the Minister to make an unequivocal statement as to whether the Government intended to make any further motions in respect of the two bills affecting the reorganisation of Local Self-Government in the province.

Mr. Raghavendra Rao said the Government had given ample notice of their intention to move the bill and it was incorrect to say that the House was being taken by surprise.

Thereupon Mr. Kedar threatened to stage a walk-out, whereupon the President, Mr. Risvi, adjourned the House for half an hour at 1-30 with a view to allow both the Opposition and the Government to sink their differences and find out a solution of the impasse.

When the House reassembled at 2 p. m. it was found that there was no change in the attitude of either party. Mr. Kedar, in the course of a lengthy statement, claimed that the Ministry had no courage to proceed with the Bills affecting Local Self-Government in view of the challenge thrown out by him the previous day, that a ministry which failed to make further motions in respect of its own bills had ceased to command the confidence of the House and that it no longer represented either the province or the House.

Mr. Raghavendra Rao, replying, said that once the Opposition had been given notice of business the Government were entitled to take up the business according to their convenience. As regards the challenge thrown out by the Opposition the same would be accepted when it was necessary to accept it. He asked the Opposition not to take shelter under technical points to remove the Ministry but to take the straight course open to them.

The President said that what they had to see was whether the Hon'ble Mr. Khaparde as member of the House and the Government had the right to make a motion which he sought to make. He saw nothing which stood in his way. Probably it was pure tactics on his part not to make the motion in respect of the Local Self-Government Bill.

When Mr. Khaparde next rose to move for consideration of the Select Committee report on the Nagpur Improvement Trust Bill, about twenty members, headed by Mr. Kedar, withdrew from the House. They, however, declared that the walk-out was not for the whole day and that they would re-enter the House in case the Government sought to move the Local Self-Government and Municipalities Amending Bills taking advantage of their absence.

Mr. Kedar's re-entry into the Council was as dramatic as his exit and he surprised the House by taking his seat exactly six minutes after he left it. The Nagpur Improvement Trust Bill and two other official Bills were passed into law.

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTION

When the House reassembled at 4 p. m., almost all the members were back in their seats. Mr. Iftikar Ali (Jubbulpore) moved an adjournment motion to discuss

the interference of the Government officer in elections in the Buldana District and the harassment of candidates belonging to a certain party.

In the course of his speech Mr. Iftikar Ali referred to the fact that the Non-Brahmin Party of Buldana had carried on peaceful propaganda in favour of their candidates and the party opposed to them had sought to move the authorities to take action against Mr. Anandaswami and Mr. Pandhari Patel, who were the leaders of the party. Certain persons interested in putting down the candidates of the party had also applied to the authorities to take action under Section 153 against Mr. Anandaswami, that an ex-parte enquiry was held, that a certain official called the leaders and threatened to take proceedings against them and that such interference had impeded the propaganda work in that district.

Mr. R. A. Kewthar, opposing the motion, said that the mover's statements were mostly incorrect. The Non-Brahmin Party indulged in vulgar propaganda against barristers and pleaders and exhorted the electorate to send in only uneducated persons to the Assembly. Even Hindu women were attacked and aspersions cast on their character by some speakers. He hoped the House would not tolerate such methods whatever party was resorting to these methods. The phrases used at one meeting were so vulgar that they might have easily provoked a riot. Immediately after the election in 1935 riots on mass scale had broken out in Buldana District in which rioters resorted to looting and arson. Apprehending a repetition of it, certain Bar Associations in the district unanimously passed resolutions urging the authorities to prevent the dissemination of defamatory propaganda and to safeguard their rights. The allegation that the enquiry was held in camera was unfounded. The speaker failed to understand how taking action against persons who excited class hatred could be construed as hampering electioneering propaganda.

The Hon'ble Mr. Raghavendro Rao, Home Member, opposing the motion, said the matter was engaging the attention of the Government and he did not propose to anticipate their decision. He added that the policy of the Government about elections was the same as outlined by the Home Member in the Legislative Assembly. He urged the councillors and other Democrats not to stir evil forces, having regard to the good of the province and the future of democracy.

Rao Sahab Fulay (Labour), Mr. C. B. Parekh (Nagpur) and Mr. V. B. Choudal supported the motion on principle, namely, interference in election propaganda and urged upon the Government to show more tolerance. The last-named speaker also appealed to Mr. Iftikar Ali to withdraw the motion as his purpose had been served.

Khan Bahadur Mirza Rahman Beg (Akola) opposed the motion, while Seth Seolal deplored the activities of those leaders who had engineered a motion that would embitter the feelings.

Mrs. Tambe said that women were prepared to face the hardships of political life, but urged those who indulged in propaganda not to cast aspersions on the character of women.

Mr. Y. V. Kale said that after the ousting of the Brahmins in the local bodies as a result of Non-Brahmin propaganda, a second phase had arisen, namely, agitation by the uneducated Non-Brahmins against their own educated brethren. The rise of the communal parties was depressing. He also opposed the motion.

After his final speech, Mr. Iftikar Ali announced his withdrawal of the adjournment motion.

#### MONEY LENDERS' AMEND. BILL

For the first time in the history of the second reformed Council, an amendment was to-day declared lost, no one voting in its favour and twenty-one against. The motion was in respect of a non-official Bill including mortgages in the provisions of the Money-Lenders Act and was sponsored by Nationalists and opposed by the People's Party. When it was pressed to a division, Nationalists refrained from voting and the original Bill tabled by Khan Bahadur Mirza Rahman Beg was then passed into law. The House was then prorogued.



# The Punjab Legislative Council

Autumn Session—Lahore—20th. October to 10th. November 1936

## ELECTION OF NEW PRESIDENT

The last session of the Punjab Legislative Council under the Montford Constitution commenced at Lahore on the 20th. October 1936. Rao Bahadur *Choudhri Chotturam*, leader of the Unionist Party, was elected President. Rao Bahadur Chotturam obtained 56 votes as against his rival, Sardar Bahadur *Buta Singh's* 28 votes.

All Hindu and Sikh members of the Council, barring four, staged a walk-out immediately after the result was announced, as a protest against Government members taking part in the election.

At the outset, the Secretary read out a message from the Governor that as the Deputy President had intimated his inability to preside, he had appointed Mr. J. D. *Anderson*, Legal Remembrancer to take the chair for the purpose of the presidential election. Mr. Anderson read out the names of the respective candidates and asked the House to proceed with the election by ballot.

Thereupon *Raja Narendranath*, leader of the Hindu Reform Party, rose on a point of order and said that in view of the fact that the Deputy President was standing for Presidentship, there should be no election. He continued to state that the Deputy President's rival was, moreover, a violent partisan.

Opposition members objected that there could be no speeches in this vein and the President said that no personal observations were called for.

Mr. *Nanakchand Pandit*, another member of the Hindu Party, quoted May's "Parliamentary Procedure" to show that speeches for and against were permitted before election but the President held that they were following their own rules of election and not May's "Parliamentary Procedure."

Mr. *Mukundlal Puri* thereupon said that their own rules did not exclude May's "Procedure", being followed specially in the present case and asked the Chair to permit speeches.

The President said that they would proceed with the election as laid down and go by their own precedents.

Mr. *Puri* thereupon asked for a ruling on *Raja Narendranath's* point of order that when the Deputy President was standing as a candidate and his opponent was a partisan, no election should take place.

Mr. *Anderson* said that under the rules of election which they were about to follow, it was not a point of order and no ruling was called for.

*Raja Narendranath* then appealed to the Leader of the House that the Government members should remain neutral.

Mr. *Puri* supporting, said that the convention in all Parliamentary bodies was that the Government remained neutral when a party leader was seeking the suffrage of the House. He asked the Finance Member whether Government members would vote, to which Sir Donald Boyd replied in the affirmative.

*Raja Narendranath* said that the Government's participation in the presidential election to-day would cause widespread discontent and members who would be affected by it would demonstrate that fact.

Voting resulted in Choudhuri Choturam getting 56 votes and Sardar Buta Singh 28 votes. Hindu and Sikh members voted for Sardar Buta Singh.

Apocrops the walk-out staged by Sikh and Hindu members, *Raja Narendranath*, leader of the Hindu National Reform Party, in the course of a statement to the press, said :—

"The walk-out was meant to show our resentment at official members taking part in the election by giving their vote, though even the precedent of the Punjab Council was quoted. When Sir Abdul Qadir and Sir G. C. Narang were rival candidates for the presidentship, official members did not exercise their right of vote. In the election which took place to-day, the Unionist Party which is numerically the strongest party in the House should have been left to its own resources. It was highly undesirable for Government members to support, by their vote, for the presidentship a

member who had been avowed a partisan and who belonged to a party which was numerically strong.

#### MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION BILL

**27th. OCTOBER :—**The Government suffered their first defeat to-day when *Sheikh Mohamed Sadiq's* amendment for the circulation of the *Punjab Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment and Co-ordination) Bill* was carried by 31 votes to 26.

The *Revenue Member, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan*, replying to the debate said that the Bill was not a measure to help the railways in competition with buses, as was thought by certain speakers, but was really a measure to help the bus-owners. He promised to consider any reasonable reduction proposed in the rate of taxation.

#### OTHER BILLS

The House then passed the *Punjab Entertainments Duty Bill* as amended and re-returned by His Excellency the Governor.

The *Punjab Copying Fees Bill* and the *Punjab Nurses Registration Amendment Bill* were next considered and passed. The House then adjourned till the 29th.

#### RELEASE OF MARTIAL LAW PRISONERS

**29th. OCTOBER :—**A lively debate occurred in the Council to-day on the resolution of *Mrs. Lekhwati Jain*, recommending to the Government for the immediate release of the 1914-15 Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners and the Martial Law prisoners of 1919. Supporters of the resolution relied on the interpretation of the terms of the imprisonment and transportation and said that in any case, the Government would not be justified in further imprisoning the provisioners.

*Mrs. Lekhwati Jain* stated that the prisoners had already served their term of imprisonment and the movements with which they were alleged to have been associated were no longer in existence. There was no apprehension that if the prisoners were released, they would join those movements, because their co-prisoners, who had already been released, had not misused their liberty. Why make only the remaining few suffer? he asked. Quoting Shakespeare on the divine attributes of mercy, *Mrs. Jain* said that it is twice blessed and both the Government and the prisoners would benefit by its exercise in the present case. *Mrs. Jain* movingly appealed to all sections of the House to join in invoking mercy for the prisoners, who had served their terms of imprisonment, and stated that this might be a gracious gesture at the time of the Coronation and the inauguration of a new era next year.

*Mr. Mukund Lal Puri* accused the Government of interpreting the rules of release differently in the case of these prisoners. He said that normally a term of life imprisonment was considered not more than 20 years and in the case of transportation not more than 14 years but in the case of the Martial Law and Conspiracy case prisoners, the rules were interpreted differently.

*Sir Donald Boyd*, Finance Member, interrupting, denied this.

*Mr. Puri* said that if the prisoners abused their liberty, the Government had ample powers to commit them again to jail.

The *Finance Member, Sir Donald Boyd*, made a lengthy reply and said that the prisoners' case would be considered in June 1937, in accordance with the usual procedure. *Sir Donald* said that a life sentence was normally considered 25 years with one-third remission, but if they were sent to home jails they lose their remission. A sentence of transportation was revised after 14 years, if the prisoner was in Punjab jails. Referring to the Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoners, *Sir D. Boyd* said that one of them, *Gurmukh Singh* had escaped from the Andamans after remaining there for seven years and was recently arrested in Lahore. The other prisoner, *Paramanand* was found to be absolutely of the same type still. Mercy could not be shown to such a person who was still of a revolutionary type. Regarding the Martial Law prisoners, the Finance Member said that six of them were still in the Andamans and in Punjab jails. The latter six were sent back as incorrigibles and had forfeited their remissions.

*Mr. Nanatchand Pandit* appealed to the Government to eliminate vindictiveness, especially as the prisoners had not had proper legal defence before the Martial Law Tribunal. Not a single lawyer came forward to defend the prisoners, as they had not the courage to do so. People were afraid to come into the witness box to give evidence for the prisoners. As they had not had proper justice, they might now be released.

The debate was at this stage adjourned.

## LAHORE MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

**30th. OCTOBER :—***Pandit Nanakchand's* unqualified assertion that Lahore was the dirtiest and the filthiest city in the world and Sir Gokal Chand Narang's statement that although he believed in Swaraj Government, he certainly did not believe in a Swaraj Government which denied civic amenities to the citizens, were some of the highlights of a most interesting debate in the Council to-day, to discuss the supersession of the Lahore Municipal Committee.

After members from all sides had spoken, the Government wanted a clear vote from the House and Sir *Gokal Chand* moved for closure of the debate which was agreed to, but the mover exercised his right of reply and time being reached, the motion was talked out.

*Shaikh Mohd. Sadiq*, mover of the adjournment motion, and his supporters criticised the Minister for Local Self-Government, Sir Gokal Chand Narang and the Executive Officer, Rai Bahadur Sankar Das Luthra (who had been appointed Assistant Administrator under Mr. Jones). They said that the Executive Officer, who was a relative of the Minister, had become a "Mussolini" in Municipal affairs and had refused to co-operate with the municipality and had thrown its working out of gear. They maintained that the Executive Officer was all-powerful and members had no powers under the new Municipal Act and the Executive Officer had ignored the wishes of the Municipality.

*Shaikh Mohd. Sadiq* said, "Our local self-governments has become Gokal Self-Government" and complained that instead of superseding the Committee, the Minister should have appointed an enquiry committee and brought home the guilt to the party to blame.

*Mr. Dobson*, Commissioner of Lahore Division, who in 1931 presided over the Committee of Enquiry into the working of the Lahore Municipal committee and who had recommended the supersession of the Committee then, explained why he had made the recommendation again on the present occasion. He said that the Committee had consistently placed obstacles in the way of the Executive Officer and had conducted their proceedings generally in a most unsatisfactory way. Rowdy scenes had disfigured their meetings and much time had been wasted in quarrelling among themselves. The financial condition of the Committee was far from satisfactory and supersession had come not a day too soon.

*Sir Gokal Chand Narang* said that no one was more sorry than he over the supersession of the Municipal Committee of the principal city in the province. But there was no doubt that citizens had welcomed supersession as a blessing. The charge that the Municipality was suppressed without an enquiry was baseless. In 1931 the Enquiry Committee had recommended supersession, but he had given the Committee five years to make good. All suggestions given to the Committee fell on deaf ears. As a result of several representations to the Ministry regarding maladministration of the Committee, an inspectorate was appointed. The report of the inspectorate which ran into 300 pages showed that the Committee's working was full of malpractices. To have appointed a fresh enquiry simply to apportion the blame would have been to repeat Nero's fiddling when Rome was burning. Members who had failed in their civic duty had laid the blame on the Executive Officer merely to cover up their own inefficiency. All superior Government officers had reported that the Executive Officer had carried out his duties in a most commendable manner in spite of his receiving no co-operation from the Committee.

*Mr. Nanakchand Pandit* recalled *Mr. Justice Agha Haider's* personal opinion that Lahore was the dirtiest city in the world and added that it was undoubtedly the filthiest and a whole host of diseases had made their home in Lahore.

*Malik Mohamed Din*, who was the President of the Committee at the time it was superseded, accused the Executive Officer of withholding his co-operation and said that the same was true of some members of the Committee who wished that the regime of the Muslim majority in Lahore should end in a fiasco.

## PUNJAB TOWN IMPROVEMENT AMEND. BILL

**9th. NOVEMBER :—**The Punjab Town Improvement Amendment Bill, necessitated by the recent supersession of the Lahore Municipal Committee in order to enable the Government to nominate the members on the City Improvement Trust in place of the nominees of the Municipal Committee, was passed without much discussion.

## PUNJAB LAND ALIENATION AMEND. BILL

The *Punjab Land Alienation Amendment Bill* seeking to extend the benefit of the act to trees standing on the land of agriculturists was also passed by 48 votes to 10, urban Hindu members opposing the measure.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

**10th. NOVEMBER :—***His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab* addressed the Council to-day on the conclusion of its session which happened to be the last sitting of the Council under the present constitution. In the course of his remarks, he observed :

"The Punjab is virile and progressive. Feelings are apt to run high at times and occasions will arise in the future as in the past when the task of administration will not be easy, but underneath there is a solid foundation of sound commonsense and it is this which will see the province through its difficulties as they occur. The New Constitution is a tremendous advance on the old one, but it contains little for which the present one has not prepared the ground and I believe the Punjab will acquit itself as honourably under the one as it has done under the other. There is a general desire to secure just, stable and efficient administration and to a successful end the constitution in the spirit in which it has been conceived. Fulfilment of hopes will lie mainly with the people and their representatives. They can count on the loyal assistance of the servants of the Government and with all working for the common good the task will be achieved. For myself I will strive within the constitution to do all that is possible to ensure success and particularly to foster and strengthen the spirit of disinterested public service which is the keynote of a good and stable Government."

His Excellency struck an optimistic note regarding the future financial prospects of the province remarking, "we cannot expect boom years to return but we can hope for increasing relief from the hard struggle which the recent years witnessed." His Excellency referred to the disappointment caused by the financial settlement under the Government of India Act which had thrown the Punjab entirely on its own resources for the expansion of existing activities. This was the more unwelcome because there had been no time when money could be spent with such advantage or when people were so eager to press forward.

Referring to rural reconstructions His Excellency expressed satisfaction to find more vigorous life in the villages. The spirit of progress, he said, was abroad which was typical of the movement which was gathering force under its own momentum. There is an immense amount of solid work being done which was greatly assisted by special grants by the Government of India. The time is ripe for a big advance, continued His Excellency, and no matter what its character may be, the Government of the day would find one of its most absorbing tasks will be giving a clear lead to the people eager to go ahead. The conditions are auspicious and any Government based on popular vote must necessarily extend and intensify the policy of reconstruction. It is not a matter of urban versus rural interest. The two are so closely knit together that it is impossible to think of them apart. Artificial distinctions between them merely obscure the economic realities.

His Excellency hoped that the new Assembly will be well represented by all parties in experience, influence and sanity which distinguished the present council.

Earlier, His Excellency referred in appreciative terms to the work done by the present council during its six years life-time and paid a tribute to the members of the cabinet adding that the best promise for the future lay in the experience of the past.

# The Assam Legislative Council

Autumn Session—Shillong—15th. September to 3rd. October '36

## THE ASSAM RIFLES BILL

**15th. SEPTEMBER :—**The autumn session of the Assam Legislative Council opened at Shillong on the 15th. September 1936. The Hon. *Maulvi Faisnoor Ali* presided.

The Council passed the Assam Births and Deaths Registration (Amendment) Bill 1936 and the Assam Rifles (Amendment) Bill 1936. Mr. *Dennahy*, in introducing the Assam Rifles Bill, said that its object was to change the present term of service of recruits to 4 years and each succeeding year to 2 years up to 10 years with a view to prevent the frequent discharge of results.

## FINANCIAL POSITION

The Hon. Mr. *W. L. Scott*, Finance Member, presented a Note on the present financial situation of the province showing that Assam's deficit in 1936-37 would be about Rs. 52 lakhs. Compared with the actuals in the corresponding period of 1935-36 the collections of land revenue and forests during the first quarter of the present year show an increase of Rs. 94,000 and Rs. 33,000 respectively. Revenue from "taxes on income" is likely to be better by Rs. 25,000, land revenue by Rs. 3,87,000, excise by Rs. 25,000, stamps by Rs. 1,00,000, forests by Rs. 1,00,000, civil works by Rs. 4,62,000 (from the reserve fund of the Central Road Development Account). Rs. 5,00,000 is expected from the Government of India for economic development and improvement of rural areas. On the other hand, a decrease of Rs. 2,00,000 is anticipated under recovery of agricultural loans on the expenditure side while a saving of Rs. 1,39,000 is expected as a result of the postponement of some new scheme.

It is anticipated that there will be an excess of Rs. 10,40,000 which will be required for works under petrol tax projects and Rs. 4,01,000 which represents the unexpected balance of the grant for economic development granted by the Government of India during 1935-36.

## ASSAM COURT FEES AMEND. BILL

The Hon. Mr. *W. L. Scott* next introduced the Assam Court Fees (Amendment) Bill 1936. He explained the financial position of the Province as created by the *Niemeyer* Report and its acceptance by Parliament.

He found that in 1937-38 there would be a deficit of about six lakhs and on that basis Government decided that all departments must be asked to economize to the extent of three and one-third per cent of the Budget of 1936-37 being close to 3 crores, a saving of three and a third per cent meant a saving of 10 lakhs but it was recognised that some heads of expenditure such as pensions were not susceptible of reductions at all. However, it was hoped that a saving of six lakhs would be effected and this would just close the gap anticipated between revenue and expenditure.

The deficit, however, would probably be nine lakhs. Government were doing their best, he said, to recognize to the extent of six lakhs. When this figure would be reached was uncertain, hence the necessity of raising revenues by taxation such as the Court Fees Bill. The Bill was opposed by Mr. *Rohini Kumar Choudhury*, Mr. *Sanat Kumar Das* and *Maulvi Abdul Mazid Ziooshams* and was postponed for further consideration.

Mr. *Gopendralal Das Choudhury's* adjournment motion criticizing improper procedure adopted by the revising authorities of the Shillong backward classes constituency of the Assam Legislative Council was carried by 22 votes to 15.

## ASSAM STAMP AMEND. BILL

**16th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council rejected to-day the Assam Court Fees (Amendment) Bill, 1936 and the Assam Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1936, brought by the Hon'ble Mr. *W. L. Scott*, Finance Member to improve the revenues of the Province.

**ASSAM LOCAL BOARDS ELECTION BILL**

The Council passed the Assam Local Boards Election (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1936, which extended the life of the present local boards to not more than one year from April 1, 1937.

The adjournment motion brought by Mr. *Rohini Kumar Choudhuri* to censure the Government of Assam for their present financial plight was defeated by 20 to 17 votes.

**ASSAM MONEY-LENDERS' BILL**

**17th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council discussed to-day the new Assam Moneylenders' (Amendment) Bill (1936), which was introduced by *Maulvi Abdur Rashid Choudhury*.

The debate brought out the fact that in Assam credit is already shy and poor people are experiencing difficulty in getting money for their agricultural operations. After a considerable amount of discussion, the Bill was sent to a select committee by the casting vote of the President.

The Bill sought to amend the Assam Moneylenders' Act of 1934 as follows:

By giving powers to courts to re-open and readjudicate on decrees already passed by courts even before the Moneylenders' Act of 1934 came into operation; by reducing the rate of interest from 12 and half to 12 per cent in the case of secured debts and from 18 and three-fourth to 18 per cent in the case of unsecured loans; by leaving no option to courts to go beyond 12 per cent and 18 per cent interest; limiting the interest in the aggregate to the amount of the principal only, with further provision that the interest already paid, if in excess of the principal, will be deducted from the principal; the principal will always be the original principal and not the amount subsequently contracted by changing the bond.

**NON-OFFICIAL BILLS**

The Council next passed *Maulvi Abdul Khaliq Choudhury's* Assam Land Revenue Reassessment Bill (1935).

*Khan Sahib Maulvi Mizanar Rahman's* Bill to exempt public places of worship from certain municipal taxes was sent to a select committee.

*Maulvi Abdul Majid Ziauddin's* Goalpara Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1935, was taken into consideration. The Council then adjourned till the 19th.

**SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS**

**19th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Government presented their demands for supplementary grants. The Hon. *Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutta* moved for a grant of Rs. 400,015 for the purpose of building barracks at Jorhat and Dibrugarh for the accommodation of an increased number of convicts, for water supply in the Tezpur mental hospital, for extending two bridges on the Shillong-Sylhet road, for waterways in the Nowgong district and for a few other bridges on the Assam trunk road.

Mr. *Kashinath Saikia* opposing the token grant of Rs. 5 for the construction of barracks for convicts said that it was the duty of the State to check crimes whether it was due to over-population as admitted by Government or to economic depression. Regarding the extension to bridges, he pointed out that the Public Works Department ought to have taken all factors into consideration while designing and constructing original bridges that would have saved the present wastage of Rs. 30,000 involved in new extensions.

*Maulvi Abdul Hamid* asked for a token grant of Rs. 5 with a view to provide Rs. 5,000 annually for the first three years to St. Edmund's College, Shillong, for the new B. T. Classes and to provide a further sum of Rs. 14,570 for a hostel for Government teachers. Mr. *Kashinath Saikia* brought to the notice of Government that it was necessary to increase the grant of Rs. 5,000 so as to enable the college authorities to reduce the rates of fees. Formerly, the Assam Government used to pay Rs. 19,000 to the Bengal Government for their teachers.

**MOTOR VEHICLES & DEBT CONCILIATION BILLS**

**21st. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council passed to-day two important Bills, namely, the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation Bill, 1936, which allows the Govt. to substitute for the present taxation on motor vehicles at varying rates by various local authorities a single provincial tax at uniform rates specified for various kinds of vehicles, and the Assam Debt Conciliation Bill, according to which debt conciliation boards will be set up to effect reasonable settlement of debts so as to relieve agriculturists. Parties may appear before such boards by agents authorised in writing but not legal practitioners.

## SYLHET TENANCY BILL

While the Sylhet Tenancy Bill 1936 was under consideration, *Maulvi Abdul Khaliq Choudhury* moved an amendment to confer tenancy right on persons in reserved forest lands. Mr. S. P. Desai, Finance Secretary, pointed out that this could not be done as in forest lands, persons were allowed to have land under certain special conditions of rendering service for the benefit of the forest. *Maulvi Abdul Rashid Choudhury* wanted to confer tenancy rights on *chakrams* and others who hold tenures on condition of rendering service. Mr. *Rajendra Chandra Sen Gupta* and Mr. S. P. Desai pointed out that this could not be done and his amendment was lost by 23 to 8 votes.

**22nd. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council discussed to-day several clauses of the Sylhet Tenancy Bill, 1936.

*Maulavi Abdul Rashid Choudhury* put forward an amendment to substitute ten per cent for twenty per cent of the consideration money payable by a tenant as a transfer fee to a landlord for the sale of a holding by a tenant.

The mover said that in the present depressing conditions tenants could not pay such a rate and that in the Goalpara Tenancy Act the rate was ten per cent. *Maulavi Abul Majid Zia-shams* said that even ten per cent was high. Mr. Sanat Kumar Das and Mr. Kashinath Saikia also supported the amendment.

The President asked if it were not true that the majority of the voters were tenants. Mr. *Gopendra Lal Das Choudhury* opposed the amendment saying that according to present custom, landlords charge 25 to 35 per cent as a transfer fee and the Bill was a compromise between different extremes. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Moshroff suggested that now that occupancy rights were going to be conferred on tenants the value of the land would rise and tenants would not be affected by the rates given in the Bill.

Mr. S. P. Desai, Revenue Secretary, said that at present the occupancy ryots had no right to transfer their holdings without the consent of the landlords but the present Bill was going to give them a free right of transfer which was a valuable concession for which it would not be unjustifiable for the landlord to demand twenty per cent of the selling price of the holding as his transfer fee. In Bengal also, he continued, the rate was 20 per cent so that if in Goalpara the rate was ten per cent it had to be remembered that the occupancy ryots there had not the same rights as the occupancy ryots in Sylhet would have. The amendment being put to vote was lost.

*Moulvi Abdul Majid Zia-shams* said that the principle of a settled ryot was recognised alike in the Bengal Tenancy Act as in the Goalpara Tenancy Act. The principle of a settled ryot, he continued, had been recognized in the Sylhet Tenancy Bill. He argued that such a right should not have been refused on the ground that Sylhet landlords were petty landlords. Khan Sahib Maulavi Mohmud Ali opposed the amendment.

## COURT FEES &amp; STAMP BILLS TO BE RECONSIDERED

**24th. SEPTEMBER :—**The President announced to-day that the Hon. Sir Robert Reid had been appointed Governor of Assam in succession to His Excellency Sir Michael Keane and that the Governor of Assam had asked the Council to reconsider the Assam Court Fees and the Stamps Amendment Bills, which the House recently threw out. Friday October 2 was fixed for the reconsideration of these Bills.

## SYLHET TENANCY BILL (CONTD.)

Discussion on the Sylhet Tenancy Bill was then resumed. All the amendments, except one, were lost. The Government did not agree to Khan Bahadur Maulvi Muhammad Moshroff's amendment to refuse to occupancy ryots the right to transfer their property by the wakf according to Mohammedan Law. The Khan Bahadur's point was that an occupancy ryot was not competent to create permanent encumbrances on a property over which he had but imperfect rights. The amendment was lost.

There was considerable discussion on Clause 42 of the Bill which provide that subject to the provisions of Section 41 "when a ryot has a right of occupancy in respect of any land he shall be entitled (1) to plant (2) to enjoy the flowers, fruits and other products of (3) to fell and (4) to utilize or dispose of the timber of any tree on such land provided that in doing so he does not contravene the provisions of any law."

*Maulvi Abdul Khatique Choudhury* moved an amendment adding the words "planted by him" after the word "tree". He was against giving unlimited right to a tenant in the matter of felling trees not planted by him. He pointed out that under the present system a tenant had to take the consent of the landlord in felling a tree not grown by him. The new provision would give him a "license" to devastate the land with no incentive to improve it.

The amendment was withdrawn and another one was moved by *Mr. General Das Choudhury* suggesting that the tenant should not fell trees described by the Local Government as valuable. *Mr. Senat Kumar Das* opposed the amendment saying that a tenant must have the right over trees in the areas. *Mr. S. P. Desai, Revenue Secretary*, opposing the amendment said that the Bengal Tenancy Act had conferred on tenants the right of full possession over trees. To the danger that tenants might ruin properties clause 41 of the Bill offered an effective remedy.

The amendment was lost.

To the provision in clause 44 that an occupancy ryot shall not be liable to ejectment for arrears of rent but that his holding shall be liable in execution of a decree for the rent thereof and the rent shall be the first charge on it, *Maulvi Abdul Khatique Choudhury* moved an amendment that an occupancy ryot shall be liable to ejectment for arrears of rent and his holding shall be liable to sale in execution of a decree for the rent thereof and the rent shall be the first charge on it. The amendment was lost. The House also discussed clause 82 to-day and then adjourned.

**28th. SEPTEMBER :—***Maulavi Abdur Rashid Choudhury* moved an amendment to-day substituting half the number of landlords or a considerable number of tenants for any person in Clause 117 of the Bill which states that the local Government may make an order directing that a survey be made and a record of rights prepared by a revenue officer in respect of all lands in any local area, estate or tenure or part whether these lands have been let out or occupied for agricultural purposes or not provided that, when any person having an interest in these lands makes an application for an order under this section he shall deposit or give a security for an amount for the payment or expenses as the Government may direct.

The amendment was opposed by Government and lost.

Clause 137 of the Bill which provides that expenses for the preparation of a record of rights shall be defrayed under orders of the local Government by landlords, tenants and other occupants of lands was strongly opposed by some members on an amendment moved by *Maulavi Abdur Rashid Choudhury* to make the Government responsible for half the cost for the preparation of a record of rights. His opinion was that the economic condition of the people was bad and Sylhet was a land of petty ryots and petty landlords and they should not be saddled with the cost.

*Mr. S. P. Desai, Revenue Secretary*, pointed out that a record of rights would benefit chiefly the landlords and tenants and it was unfair to saddle the general tax-payer with any portion of the cost. *Maulavi Abdur Rashid Choudhury* also suggested that the expenses should be paid by not less than twenty annual instalments instead of by such instalments as the Local Government would propose.

The amendments when put to the vote were lost by 13 to 19 votes.

*Maulavi Abdul Khatique Choudhury* moved to delete altogether Clause 140 which states that the Local Government may make an order directing a revenue officer to make a survey and record of all the lands in a specified local area which was private land. He asked why Government should take such arbitrary powers to survey land. *Mr. Rajendra Chandra Sen Gupta, Special Officer*, pointed on behalf of Government that it was to the interest of both tenants and landlords to know what were exactly the private lands of a proprietor. When these were clearly demarcated, tenants could acquire no rights in the private lands of any proprietor. This would prevent disputes between landlords and tenants. The House at this stage adjourned.

**29th. SEPTEMBER :—***Mr. Kashinath Saitia* said that it was surprising that not a single amendment proposed by the Opposition was carried.

*Maulavi Abdur Rashid Choudhury* opposed the passing of the Bill which, he said, was in some respects opposed to the interests of the ryots. *Maulavi Abdur Rashid Choudhury* suggested that he knew the conditions of the ryots better than the previous speaker and he believed that the Bill was in the interests of the ryots.

*Maulavi Abdul Khatique Choudhury* moved an amendment to clause 143 of the Bill which states that the revenue officer shall record a proprietor's private land as land which is proved to have been cultivated as *Nil Jole* or *Khamar* by the



proprietor for twelve continuous years immediately preceding the passing of the Act. He desired to delete the expression "for twelve continuous years immediately preceding the passing of the Act" because in his opinion it was unnecessary and absurd for a landlord to give proof of twelve years' continuous possession over his private lands in order to entitle it to be recorded as his private land by a revenue officer. He was further of the opinion that the survey and record cost which would accrue was an unnecessary burden on the proprietors. He asked what the position of a tenant would be who purchased the proprietary right of a piece of land from a landlord and if in another case, he purchases the occupancy right from a tenant and subsequently purchases the proprietary right from the landholder one or two years prior to the commencement of this Act.

Mr. Gopendra Lal Das Chowdhury supported the amendment and asked if, by possessing tenanted land as proprietors of *Khamar* for the last twelve years, the land would become a proprietor's private land under this section. The Government replied in the affirmative; the amendment being put to the vote was lost.

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chowdhury brought an amendment under clause 204 (sub-clause I) of the Bill which refers to the denial of a landlord's title by tenants in a rent suit and the damage to be awarded to the landlord as not exceeding ten times the amount of the annual rent payable by the tenant.

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chowdhury contended that damages should not exceed twenty-five times the amount of the annual rent payable by the tenant or an order or decree forfeiting the company right of the tenant at the discretion of the landlord.

He argued that in a rent suit, the plaintiff landlord has to pay ten times or more by way of other expenses than the actual legal fees. If in a rent suit concerning a small amount of rent, the tenant defendant renounces his character as tenant of the landlord by setting up without a reasonable or probable cause the title in a third person or himself, the landlord plaintiff has to incur much more expenses than in an ordinary rent suit to prove his proprietary rights. He therefore stated that in such suits damages should not exceed twenty-five times the amount of annual rent.

Government opposed the amendment which was lost.

Maulavi Abdul Khaliq Chowdhury moved for the omission of clause 211 which states that should any person otherwise than in accordance with any enactment for the time being in force distrain or attempt to distrain the produce of a tenant's holding or, except with the authority or consent of the tenant prevent or attempt to prevent reaping or other operations of a holding he shall be deemed to have committed criminal trespass within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code. The amendment was lost and the bill was passed.

#### ASSAM MUNICIPAL AMEND. BILL

**28th. SEPTEMBER** :—The Council passed to-day, without opposition, the Assam Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1935, brought by *Khan Sahib Maulvi Miznar Rahman* of Goalpara. The Bill is intended to exempt public places of worship from the payment of water-tax and latrine-tax, over and above the holding-tax, and to that extent amends the original Municipal Act of Assam.

#### GOALPARA TENANCY AMEND. BILL (CONTD.)

The Council then passed the Goalpara Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1936, which was introduced by *Maulvi Abdul Majid Ziochshams*. The mover stated that at present, as the law stood at Goalpara regarding the non-mutation of names by jotedars and tenure holders, it was extremely harsh because when any jotedar plaintiff brought a suit for recovery of rent and if the sub-tenant defendant took the plea that the plaintiff had not had his name mutated in the landlord's office although his predecessor in interest had died, and if the plaintiff failed to prove mutation the entire suit would be dismissed. So, by changing the word "entertained" to "decreed or granted," he wanted to make the non-mutation of names a bar to a decree but not a bar to the entertainment of the suit.

The second object of the Bill was that over and above the decreasing of interest at 12 and half per cent from the time of default of payment of rent up to the date of institution, a further compulsory provision for decreasing interest from the date of realization was extremely harsh and usurious.

#### ASSAM MONEY-LENDERS' AMEND. BILL

**29th. SEPTEMBER** :—In the Council to-day, the Assam Moneylender's (Amendment) Bill was again discussed and finally rejected by 26 votes to 19.

Mr. Kashinath Saikia, member for Jorhat, then moved a resolution urging the necessity for earmarking the entire receipts from grazing taxes for the improvement of fodder supply and the development of cattle breeding in the province. The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority.

The House accepted Mr. Rohini Kumar Chowdhury's resolution for the establishment of an Agricultural School in Assam.

#### COURT FEES & STAMP BILLS CONSIDERED

**2nd. OCTOBER:—**In the Council to-day the Hon. Mr. W. L. Scott, Revenue Member, moved for reconsideration of the Assam Court Fees and Stamps Amendment Bills as recommended by His Excellency the Governor. The Revenue Member said that the Government would realise three lakhs of rupees by these Bills; this would balance next year's budget.

Maulavi Munnawar Ali opposed consideration as he thought that if the Government would implement the reconsiderations of the Retrenchment Committee appointed by the Government under the presidency of Sir Muhammad Saadulla, money could still be found for balancing the budget.

Maulavi Abdur Rasid Chowdhury said that the Government wanted money not for maintaining the present standard of administration but for a more costly government under the new constitution. He said the whole plan of the Government was to penalise the people without rhyme or reason.

Mr. Kashinath Saikia was not convinced that this form of taxation was justifiable. He argued that there was still room for further retrenchment by amalgamating the Public Works Department and the Civil Secretariat. He wanted further facts justifying the necessity for taxation.

Mr. Rohini Kumar Chowdhury said that they were on the horns of a dilemma. If these taxation Bills were not passed the Government might not continue with the present land revenue reduction of three annas in the rupee as it existed in the Assam Valley. That would be a serious loss to the people, inasmuch as the cancellation of the reduction would take away from them no less than 18 lakhs of rupees during the current year, whereas the passing of the Bills, taking effect from April next, would take away only three lakhs from the litigants. He said that the Bills could be repeated by the next Assembly, but revenue once realized would not be refunded by any Government. He wanted, therefore, a definite assurance from the Government on this point before he voted for the Bills.

Mr. Sarbeswar Barua, Mr. Mohendra Nath Gohain, Mr. Hirendra Chandra Chakrabarty and some other members demanded similar assurance.

The Hon. Mr. W. L. Scott wanted time to consider the position and the House adjourned.

**3rd. OCTOBER:—**The Council passed to-day the Assam Court Fees (Amendment) Bill 1936 and the Assam Stamps (Amendment) Bill 1936 as recommended by His Excellency the Governor and as amended by the Council. Resuming yesterday's discussion on the Assam Court Fees Amendment Bill, Mr. W. L. Scott, Revenue Member, gave the assurance as demanded by Assam Valley members yesterday that there would be no reduction in the rates of land revenue remission (three annas in the rupee) in the Assam Valley during the next year provided the Court Fees and Stamp Bills were passed by the Council.

He said that income made from receipts from these Bills would be sufficient to meet the deficit. He assured the Cachar members also that remission of one anna in the rupee would continue in that district for one year. When the president moved that the Court Fees Bill be taken into consideration it was carried by 29 to 14 votes.

Maulavi Abdul Khalique Chowdhury moved an amendment to clause 1 (sub-clause 3) suggesting that the operation of the Bill be restricted to three years instead of five years. He said that this Bill combined with the Sylhet Tenancy Act would increase revenues to a state when they will not merely meet the deficit but leave an opening balance in future budgets. The House accepted this amendment. A similar amendment was moved and carried in respect of the Stamps Amendment Bill.

Maulavi Abdur Rasid Chowdhury protested against both these Bills which he said would be against the interests of the Sylhet people.

Mr. Sanat Kumar Das regretted that Government had to carry these Bills by bargaining with the members of the Assam Valley. Khan Bahadur Keramat Ali said that if the members of the Surma Valley had known the miseries of the poor peasants

of the Assam Valley they would not have grumbled at the attitude of bargaining they had adopted. The Bills when put to the vote were carried.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S FAREWELL SPEECH

This finished the business of the House and His Excellency Sir *Michael Keane*, the Governor then said good-bye to the members of the Council. He observed that it was goodbye not only to the personnel of the Council but to an epoch of India's constitutional history.

He traced tentative approach to the principle of co-operation in place of autocratic command to the year 1861 when Indians to represent Indian opinion were for the first time taken into the Legislature of the country.

The remarkable progress, said His Excellency, that India had made towards the goal of responsible Government was no accident if it derived initially from the liberal spirit that was the historic heritage of the people of England. Those Indians who undertook in the face of calumny and misrepresentation to co-operate with the Government in the measured advance of the great constitutional work had played a predominant part in making the experiment success.

His Excellency observed that the men who set out to sabotage the Constitution in 1921 and failed were curiously enough pledging themselves to pursue the same futile policy once more. He was sure that they would fail again too.

His Excellency emphasised that the crucial fact of the new Constitution was that the Government of the country would be wholly the peoples own Government. Public opinion was awakening he said but it would take time before the ryot possessing the vote realised that by the opinion he could control Government.

Continuing His Excellency said that the party system so essential in a representative form of government was still fluid and imperfect in this country, that its growth was being hampered by divisions and cleavages not primarily based on political ideas and needs with a view to obtaining the best form of responsible Government. He commended amity and co-operation between classes and the levelling of communal distinctions in the essential task of promoting the common weal.

His Excellency emphasised that the welfare of the millions of the people who live on the land must be the first care of statesmanship and their protection should be the first criterion of good government. He thought that on the eve of an election those of the peasantry who would for the first time have votes would be entitled to ask and to be told what the members did for the peasant. The Land Revenue Re-assessment Act, he stated, would in the future secure the regulation of land revenue assessment by Statute and not by Executive order and as such would prove of great value to the agriculturist. The Moneylenders' Act and the Debt Conciliation Act aimed at solutions of the debt problem of the people. His Excellency complimented the Council on their co-operation in the scheme for rural development and the improvement of the water supply in village and communications in the province.

Referring to the financial position His Excellency pointed out that stable finance was a condition precedent to the success of the new Constitution. He congratulated the Council for passing the Stamp and Court Fees Bills which the Government brought forward as one of the means to meet the menace of an unbalanced budget and said that this was a fair and promising augury for the future. The problem of unemployment among the middle classes, the establishment of an agricultural institute and a university in Assam were three particular things which His Excellency greatly regretted his Government could not tackle for want of money. He hoped that the new Government would before long find themselves in a position to solve these problems with success.

Concluding, His Excellency quoted the remark His Excellency the Viceroy made recently that the spirit in which a Constitution was worked counted more than the letter in which it was written. He believed that members would show the same spirit of accommodation in the future as they had done in the past, that they would maintain the reign of law intact and would advance on the road of orderly progress that India had followed for the last 150 years.

Sir *Michael* then declared the Council *prorogued*.

# The Behar Legislative Council

Autumn Session—Ranchi—31st. August to 9th. September 1936

## BIHAR FLOOD SITUATION

The autumn session of the Bihar Legislative Council commenced at Ranchi on the 31st. August 1936. The Hon'ble Mr. *Niram Narayan Sinha*, Finance Member, moved a resolution regarding detestation at the recent outrage attempted against the person of His Imperial Majesty King Edward VIII and expressing deep sense of thankfulness that His Majesty was not harmed. After several members had spoken on this resolution, it was unanimously carried.

The Hon'ble Mr. *P. C. Talents* then reviewed the recent flood situation in Bihar. The floods were the severest in Saran, said he. Next came the Monghyr district. He paid tributes to local officials and non-officials for co-operation in mitigating the hardships of the people. He informed the House that the Bihar Government had spent Rs. 35,000 on relief works. He also stated that the policy of the Government about further grants for house-building and 'rabi' seeds and prevention of future floods will be announced by the Finance Member shortly in connection with the debate on the non-official resolution on the subject of floods.

## IMPROVEMENT OF CATTLE

**1st. SEPTEMBER :—**The debate on the Government resolution regarding provision of money for betterment of cattle-breeding began when *Rai Bahadur Sarat Ch. Roy* very ably discussed many aspects of the resolution. Hon'ble *Syed Abdul Asis* next dwelt upon the difficulties of getting enough fodder and said that in Bihar the fate of cattle was pitiful and asked the people to co-operate in making the Government scheme a success. He asked those who maintained meaningless beliefs and superstitions to shake these off and be up and doing for the improvement of the lot of cattle which is a great bearing on the agricultural life in Bihar.

The next speaker *Babu Ramjivan Himatsingka* said that he was very doubtful about the Government scheme and did not expect much out of it.

*Mr. S. Lal* replied to individual members and justified the Government proposal and assured the House that Government would do all that lie in their power to pay their attention to the different suggestions presented by them. He said that the two centres already selected by the Government for cattle-breeding will be able to meet the demands of pedigree bulls in Bihar at an early date if the scheme fructifies. He said that Government did not like to touch the sentiment by castrating Brahmini bulls. He stated that Government would be glad to consider the question of pasturage whenever any such opportunity occurs.

After this, the resolution was carried unanimously.

## THE COURT OF WARDS BILL

*Mr. P. C. Talents* introduced the Court of Wards Bill. After it was taken into consideration it was passed without any dissent.

## MINOR IRRIGATION & DRAINAGE WORKS BILL

After this the Hon'ble Mr. *Niram Narayan Sinha* introduced the Bihar Minor Irrigation and Drainage Works Bill which was taken into consideration. Next *Mr. Sinha* showed the necessity of such a measure which was being long-felt in the province.

*Mr. Jamuna Karjee* said that the Bill required certain improvements. He suggested that the Irrigation Committee should have two representatives both from zamindars and landlords instead of one from each class. He further said that the Government should not only bear the cost of the irrigation scheme and preliminaries and rough estimation but the whole cost of the detailed report and estimate which was according to the Bill to be a part of the cost of the work and a part of the work itself. In support of his contention *Mr. Karjee* said that the people who had to depend on agriculture for their livelihood were very badly off on account of the

unprecedented depression in the province. He tried to criticise the Government but later the Finance Member in his reply met all the criticisms levelled against the Government. He was followed by Messrs. Shafi, Maulavi Khalilur Rahman, S. K. P. Sinha, Maulavi Ghani, Kalyan Singh, who all spoke on the Bill.

At the end the Hon'ble *Nirao Narayan Sinha* replied to the criticisms of the members. He questioned the accuracy of Mr. Karjee's statement regarding the U. P. Government, who, he said, were given certain privileges by the Otto Niemeyer Committee. This was challenged and in doing so he had a passage of arms with Mr. Karjee.

After the Bill was taken into consideration it was referred to a Select Committee of the following : Khan Bahadur Shagirul Haq, Mr. C. P. N. Sinha, Satish Chandra Sinha, Bimala Prasad Sinha, Messrs. Betterton, Davies, Prior, Houlton, N. N. Sinha, S. K. P. Sinha, Karjee and Rameshwar Sinha.

The Government objected to the last two names but when a division was called the Government was defeated by a pretty big margin of votes. The House then adjourned.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

**2nd. SEPTEMBER :**—After interpellations to-day supplementary demands were taken up. The first demand for Rs. 15,750 in respect of forests was passed without any dissent. To the second supplementary demand for Rs. 300 in respect of general administration, Moulvi *Abdul Ghani* moved a cut motion urging the claims of Biharis for clerical posts. He was supported by Mr. *Jamuna Karjee*, who maintained that the claims of Biharis were being always overlooked. He urged the necessity of employing Biharis to all sorts of posts whether they be of clerical or higher services.

After Babu *Harmadeo Singh* spoke in support of the cut motion, Hon'ble Mr. P. C. Talents replied on behalf of the Government whereafter the cut motion was withdrawn by the mover and the supplementary demand was passed.

Thereafter the supplementary demand for Rs. 6,307 for an increase in the salary of the European sergeants and for supply of furniture in their quarters were taken up. The argument of the Government was that there was considerable difficulty in recruiting sergeants from the British Army on the present initial pay, which was Rs. 160 which Government proposed through this demand to increase to Rs. 160-200.

This evoked a good deal of heated discussion. Three cut motions stood in the names of Mr. *Nandakumar Ghosh*, Moulvi *Abdul Ghani* and Mr. *Jamuna Karjee*. The former two members moved their motions and the latter's motion being identical was not moved.

Mr. *Ghosh* disowned the desirability of appointing graduates of the Patna University who had completed 2 years' training of the University Training Corps as sergeants. In support of his contention Mr. *Ghosh* said that when boys fresh from colleges are appointed as D. S. Ps and A. S. Ps, there was no reason why boys who had undergone military training should not be recruited as sergeants.

He was followed by Mr. *Jamuna Karjee*, who failed to understand the necessity and anxiety of the Government to recruit sergeants from British Army. He urged the necessity of taking men from University Corps and from Indian Police Force for appointments as sergeants.

Next, Mr. S. K. P. Sinha rose to support Mr. *Ghosh's* cut motion and referred to the meeting of the Senate regarding the possible appointment of the University graduates who had undergone U. T. C. training for two years as sergeants.

Mr. D. Silva next advocated the cause of Anglo-Indians and urged the Government to take some members of the community he represents.

Hon'ble Mr. *Brett*, replying to the various members, said that discipline and great hardship were the virtues that are counted most for the sergeants and thought that the British Army men were the fittest to serve the purpose.

He was followed by Mr. *Hafiz* who said that if Government did not consider that U. T. C. men were not up to the standard, then, he thought, as a member of the U. T. C. Committee, it was not wise to maintain such a show. Mr. *Hafiz* felt more-over sure that even the undergraduates who had their due U. T. C. training would serve as meritoriously as British sergeants. Referring to the growing unemployment in the province, he said that Government should now cease filling the counted seats from outside.

Mr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, leader of the Opposition, supporting the cut motion was of opinion that U. T. C. graduates were as much workable as British sergeants.

Mr. *Bimala Charan Singh*, nominated member, supporting the Government motion was of the opinion that it was desirable to appoint British military men as sergeants as the appointment of either Hindus or Muslims might lead to numerous difficulties. He said as a sergeant if one or other became prejudiced or communal, and as the head of a force, at times situation might grow critical.

Mr. *Nandakumar Ghosh* pointed out to Mr. *Singh* that the sergeants were not the highest officers and they had magistrates over them for their guidance and as both Hindus or Muslims hold responsible posts of judges and such others, why Indians if appointed as sergeants would be detrimental to public interest.

Mr. *Hasan Jan* also supported the Government motion on a similar plea that on ground of special military training British sergeants were preferred. Mr. *Ghosh* replied thereafter.

Mr. *P. C. Talents* spoke in favour of the motion and remarked that "even in his highest efficiency he could never presume himself capable of being a sergeant or an armed reserve. This caused considerable laughter.

On an assurance given by Mr. *Brett* that if suitable Indian youths of U. T. C. desirous of joining ranks of sergeants are available, he would gladly ask the Government to give a sympathetic consideration to the fact, the motions were withdrawn when the Council, after a lively debate, adjourned.

#### ENQUIRY INTO N. BIHAR FLOODS

3rd. SEPTEMBER :—After interpellations to-day, Mr. *S. K. P. Sinha* moved his resolution recommending Government to thoroughly investigate into the causes of recurring floods in North Bihar and to undertake a scheme of permanent relief for that area.

In support of his resolution Mr. *Sinha* described the havoc caused by floods in North Bihar—especially in the district of Saran and urged upon the Government to undertake an investigation whatever enormous the cost might be in view of the heavy losses.

After *R. B. Dworhanath*, *R. B. Birendranath Chakravarty*, Mr. *Meyrick*, Mr. *Fazlur Rahman*, *K. B. Shaghirl Hug*, Mr. *Md. Shafes* and Mr. *Abdul Ghani* had spoken on the subject, Mr. *S. K. P. Sinha* replied to the debate. After the Hon'ble Mr. *N. N. Sinha* replied on behalf of the Government, the resolution was put to vote and passed without a division.

#### REDUCTION OF SONE CANAL RATES

*Babu Radhamohan Sinha* next moved a resolution recommending Government to reduce the Sone canal rates to the extent which existed before the last enhancement. In tracing the history of the increase in the rate of canal water he said that from Rs. 1 per acre in 1896 it had gone gradually to Rs. 4-8 in 1922 per acre. The mover further said it was very hard for the cultivators to pay this high rate now when they are financially so very badly off. In the end of his speech he appealed to the Finance Member to take the gratitude of the people for Government and himself by reducing the rate.

The Hon'ble Mr. *Nirsu Narayan Sinha*, while speaking on behalf of Government, referred to the discussions raised in this Council on two previous occasions—one last year in Ranchi and the other early this year in Patna—by Mr. *Jamuna Karjee* on the subject. According to the Finance Member, Mr. *Karjee's* motions had one merit that he sought reduction of canal rates in the whole province while the present resolution sought reduction of canal rate only in the district of Shahabad from which the mover came. The Finance Member further maintained that the rates of Sone canals were favourable, as compared to those prevailing in other provinces.

Mr. *Jamuna Karjee* suitably replied to the Finance Member and while so doing he recalled the days when the Finance Member was an ornamental member of this Council when he occupied the seat of one of the non-official members. Just after the last enhancement in the rates of canals, proceeded Mr. *Karjee*, when a resolution was brought for the enhancement of the canal rates, the prices of agricultural commodities had considerably gone up and rice was selling at 7 seers per rupee. The Hon'ble Mr. *Nirsu Narayan Sinha* thought fit to advocate the reduction but now when the prices of agricultural commodities had gone very considerably down—by about 60 p. c. since 1923 to 1935 according to the admission of Bihar Government themselves in their Administration Report issued early this year—he, (The Hon. Mr. *N. N. Sinha*) opposed the proposal of a reduction at a time when the peasants were hard hit

owing to unprecedented depression which had been prevailing in the country for the last few years—Bihar not being an exception to it.

The change in the attitude and the outlook of the Hon. Mr. Sinha, according to Mr. Karjee, was due to his elevation to the high office of the Finance Member which he was occupying now and any one who had witnessed the Hon. Mr. N. N. Sinha's performance as a non-official member will be in a sea of wonder if he happened to witness his performance now as the Finance Member of the Bihar Government against which he used very strong language. Proceeding, Mr. Karjee said that the ground taken by Government at the time of the last enhancement was that as the prices of all commodity had gone up, it was hardly unreasonable to complain that the prices of water had gone up (He actually quoted the Government member's words used at that time) and that the Government should stand on the same ground and should reduce the canal rates now when the prices of all commodities have gone enormously low. Mr. Karjee corrected the Finance Member by saying that the present resolution, if passed, would not only benefit the cultivators of the Shahabad but also those of the districts of Patna and Gaya.

Messrs. *Radha Prasad, Sherafat Hussain, Yunus* and *Rai Bahadur Syammandan Sahay* supported the resolution while Mr. *Bimala Charan Saha*, a nominated member, opposed the Bill whereafter the Council adjourned for the day.

**4th. SEPTEMBER :—**Mr. *S. K. P. Sinha*, speaking against the resolution to-day, said that if this resolution was brought into effect, what method was effected to make up the loss of revenue. He further maintained that canal rates were no tax and the Council would be unjust if it proposed to give benefit to a particular area.

*Babu Jugjiwan Ram* (depressed class member) supporting the resolution said that the income from one bigha came to Rs. 16-8 while the expenses amounted to Rs. 19-1. Thus the agriculturists were running at a distinct loss. Proceeding he suggested an investigation into the matter.

*Moulvi Abdul Ghani* also opposed the resolution. After *Babu Ramanagraha Narayan Sinha* spoke on the resolution, *Babu Radhamohan Sinha*, replying to the debate, quoted some sentences from the speech of the Finance Member when he supported the proposal of reduction in rates of Sone canals when he was a non-official member.

After he had replied to the points raised in the debate, the *Finance Member*, giving final reply on behalf of Government, said that in a democratic government members of opposition of to-day would be ministers of to-morrow and ministers of to-morrow would be one day members of the opposition. Under such circumstances, he proceeded, it was quite possible for them to change their views. He enquired what would happen if by some natural calamity the canals are destroyed. According to him, there were many other charges to be met over the maintenance charge. Moreover, the Dacca and Triveni canals were losing concerns for which the whole province had to pay. If the surplus from canals are to be reverted, many beneficial institutions will suffer. If the canal rates are reduced, then the expenditure of some departments will have to be reduced as the province has got only so much income as is required for the requirements of the province. Moreover, the budget had been prepared and if this resolution was passed, it was not possible for the present Government to do anything. It was, therefore, he maintained, necessary to leave this question for the reformed Assembly.

After this the resolution was put to vote and being pressed to division was lost by 20 to 44 votes.

#### NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

**7th. SEPTEMBER :—**The House took up non-officials Bill to-day. *Moulvi Khalilur Rahaman* introduced the *Bihar Tenancy (suits validation) Bill* and the *Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill*. *Moulvi Abdul Ghani* introduced the *Bihar and Orissa Municipal Amendment Bill*. *Rai Bahadur Dwarakanath* introduced the *Estates Partition Amendment Bill*. *Babu Kalyan Singh* introduced the *Chota Nagpur Partition Amendment Bill*, the *Bihar and Orissa Municipal Bill* and the *Bihar Local Self-Government Amendment Bill*.

Next, *Moulvi S. M. Hafis* presented the Reports of the Select Committee on the *Bengal Land Revenue Sales (Amendment Bill)* and moved the *Bihar and Orissa Amendment Bill* for reference to a Select Committee.

Thereafter Mr. S. K. P. Sinha moved the *Bihar Agriculturists' Relief Bill* to be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Hon'ble Mr. P. C. Talanta, J. W. Houlton, A. O. Davies, C. P. N. Sinha, Khan Bahadur Sagir-ul-Huq, Babu Radhaprasad Sinha, Kumar Kalikprasad Sinha, Rai Bahadur Shyammandan Sahay, Babu Jamuna Karjee and the mover.

The object of the Bill was :—The agriculturists of Bihar are groaning under a heavy weight of indebtedness. The number of money-lenders and pawn-brokers is limited resulting in monopoly among the orientals. The rates of interest charged and other conditions imposed on the creditors constitute a veritable harassment of the agriculturists. Therefore, legislation is necessary. Pawn-brokers do not issue receipts, thus creditors fall at the entire mercy of the pawners as to make it a crime punishable with fine extending to one thousand rupees. Another factor was the Kabuli menace in the countryside they visit and they advance money at exorbitant rates. This unlawful action should be constituted as a cognizable offence.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

**9th. SEPTEMBER :—**The Council voted supplementary demands for Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 3,45,619 respectively for the extension of the existing Council chamber at Patna to meet the requirements of the new legislature under the reforms and the acquisition of the Pusa estate for the establishment of a central experimental and seed farm for north Bihar. At the conclusion of the session the Council was prorogued.

### November Session—Patna—18th. to 21st. November 1936

#### AURANGABAD RIOT—ADJ. MOTION

The last session of the Council under the Montford Constitution commenced at Patna on the 18th. November 1936, Hon. Mr. Rajandhari Singh presided.

After interpellations, the President said that he had received notices of two adjournment motions, one from Messrs. Yunus, Akbari Hafiz and Chowdhry Sharafat Hussain to discuss the situation created by the recent communal riot at Aurangabad and the other from Babu Jamuna Karjee to discuss the proceedings instituted against 86 Congress and Kisan Sabha workers in the district of Bhagalpore.

The Hon'ble Mr. Nirsu Narayan Sinha, the leader of the House, objected to leave being given for the discussion of these motions on the ground that the matters relating to these motions were sub-judice and as such they could not be discussed in this House without prejudice to fair trial.

The President agreeing with the Hon'ble Member ruled both the motions out of order.

#### BIHAR FAMINE RELIEF FUND BILL

The Hon'ble Mr. Nirsu Narayan Sinha then introduced the Bihar Famine Relief Fund Bill, and moved that the Bill be taken into consideration. In explaining the objects and reasons of the Bill the Hon. Member said that the Famine Relief Fund that was being maintained by the Bihar Government was regarded as forming part of the general balances of the Government of India. The fund could be utilised only for purposes of famine relief though when the amount to the credit of fund exceeded ten lakhs of rupees, the excess over that sum might be utilized for certain other purposes. The Government of India Act, 1935 contained no provision for the continuance of this fund and when Part III of that Act come into force, the Devaluation rules would cease to operate. Consequently, the amount of the fund would, on the commencement of the new constitution, merge in the general balance of the province and there would be nothing to prevent the amount being expended on ordinary services with the result that, should occasion suddenly arise for urgent and unanticipated expenditure on a large scale on famine relief there would be no cash resources immediately available to fall back upon.

"In order to prevent such a result," the Hon. Finance Member said, "this Bill is introduced with a view to conserve the minimum balance to the credit of the



Famine Relief Fund for the purposes for which it was originally established. The Secretary of State for India in Council has sanctioned an amendment to schedule IV to the Rules to enable the Governor-General in Council to permit withdrawal of the whole or part of balance in the existing fund on being satisfied that an Act of the local legislature has made provision for the constitution as a separate fund, to be utilized only on the occasion of serious famine or flood, of the sum so withdrawn and invested in securities of the Government of India.

"It is proposed by this bill to establish a statutory fund called the Bihar Famine Fund by withdrawing ten lakhs of rupees out of the present balance of the existing Famine Relief Fund which is estimated at 22 lakhs. The fund to be formed by this Bill will not be expended save upon the relief of serious famine and the relief of distress due to serious draught, flood or other natural calamities".

Mr. S. K. P. Sinha moved an amendment to the effect that the balance of the Famine Fund should be conserved at 20 lakhs. He pointed out that Bihar was more subjected to flood and as such adequate balance should be kept in the fund to meet such emergencies. The Central Provinces, though much smaller than Bihar, had a balance of 45 lakhs in the Famine Relief Fund while Bihar had much less. He urged the Government to accept his amendment so that they might be adequately provided against famine, flood or any other natural calamity.

The amendment on being put to vote was however lost by 28 to 25 votes.

The Hon. Mr. Nares Narayan Sinha then moved his final motion that the Bill be passed and the Bill was passed without opposition.

#### BIHAR MUNICIPAL AMEND. BILL

Sir Ganesh Datta Singh, Minister of Local Self-Government, next introduced the Bihar Municipal Amendment Bill providing for prescribing electoral qualifications by rules to be formed under the Act by the Local Government as in the case of election to District and Local Boards under Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act.

Maulvi Abdul Gani opposed the bill on the ground that it was not at all desirable to take away the power of prescribing electoral qualification from the hands of the legislature and place the same in the hands of the Local Government. If the Government really wanted to liberate the qualifications of voters at municipal elections they could very easily do it by amending the provision for the same in the Act itself.

Hon. Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh replying observed that Maulvi Ghani's apprehension of the rule-making power being abused by the Government was not justified for Ministers in the future Government would be elected members responsible to the legislature.

Maulvi Abdul Ghani next moved an amendment to Section 15, sub-section 2 clause A of Behar and Orissa Municipal Act substituting annas eight for one and half rupees as franchise qualification.

Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh pointed out that Mr. Ghani sought to move by way of amendments the provisions of his own bill which he had introduced at the Ranchi session of the Council and which was ultimately withdrawn on the assurance that these matters would be looked into after the general elections were over. He contended that it was better to pass the Bill as presented and he assured the House that all the municipal bodies would be duly consulted while revising the electoral qualifications.

Maulvi Shafi and Babu Ramprasad Singh supported the amendment while Babu Bimala Charan Sinha opposed the same. The amendment was lost by 35 to 15 votes.

Other amendments in connection with this bill moved by Maulvi Abdul Ghani were also lost and the Bill was passed without division. The Council then adjourned.

#### AURANGABAD RIOT—ADJ. MOTION

19th. NOVEMBER:—At to-day's sitting of the Council, the adjournment motion which was moved by Mr. Yunus to discuss the issuing of a Government communique in connection with the Aurangabad riot at a time and in a manner which was likely to affect prejudicially the fair trial of the criminal cases pending in connection with those riots, was disallowed by the President; while another moved by Mr. S. K. P. Sinha, to discuss the question of refusal by the authorities at Aurangabad to take out a Hindu procession after the riots was allowed by the Chair.

After a short discussion, Mr. S. K. P. Sinha withdrew his adjournment motion, Hon'ble Mr. Talents, Home Member, having explained that he had used very guarded language because the whole thing was subjudice and he never meant to convey that the right of the Hindus would in any way be interfered with. The Council then adjourned till the 21st.

## SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

**21st. NOVEMBER :—**The Council voted to-day a number of supplementary demands, including Rs. 40,000 as grants-in-aid to local bodies to repair the communications damaged by the recent floods, Rs. 130,000 as loan to the Jharia Water Board for relaying a water pipe line and Rs. 177,000 under excess expenditure for jails due to receipt of increased orders for goods manufactured by jails and supply of bed-sheets, kurtas and trousers to prisoners.

## DEBATE ON UNEMPLOYMENT REPORT

On the motion of Hon. Mr. Nirsu Narayan Sinha, Leader of the House a debate was initiated on the Unemployment Committee report. Mr. Jamuna Karjee, participating in the discussion, urged the Government not to ignore the agriculturists who were the backbone of the province and tackle the unemployment prevailing among them. He asked Government to foster and develop cottage industries and pleaded for the employment of young Biharis in industries of the province. Rai Bahadur Dwarakanath asked Government to lose no time in implementing the recommendations of the Committee as the problem was becoming graver and graver.

## THE GOVERNOR'S FAREWELL SPEECH

*His Excellency the Governor* then delivered his farewell address. In doing so, he said that the Province, for some years past, had been struggling against the weight of falling revenue to maintain such progress as had been secured before post-war slump.

Since the beginning of 1934, greatest effort has had to be concentrated to repair the damage of the great earthquake on which the total expenditure incurred had been in the region of three crores of rupees. These factors stood in the way of any notable advance in the administration of Bihar.

Referring to their passing the adolescent stage to full Provincial Autonomy and the financial position of the Province as a result of Sir Otto Niemeyer's recommendations the Governor said that it was a grave disappointment to him to find that immediate betterment, which he proposed for Bihar as the minimum necessary to start on her new career, was so limited. It was his earnest hope that those who became the leaders of the province, to whatever political party they belonged, would work not for aggrandisement for themselves, or exaltation of a party or a section of the community but with the single object of doing what was best for the people of Bihar. Under this condition only, could this tremendous experiment of democracy, taken at a time when democracy had become discredited and had been discarded in so many countries in the world in favour of autocracy and dictatorship, be a real success.

The House was at this stage *prorogued*.

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# The Madras Legislative Council

August Session—Madras—31st. August to 4th. September 1936

## THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

The August session of the Madras Legislative Council commenced at Madras on the 31st. August 1936, when His Excellency Sir *Kurma Venkata Reddi*, the Acting Governor, addressed the House. He reviewed the work so far done and said that it indicated a substantial measure of progress in all directions, particularly in giving assistance to agriculturists.

Referring to the relief of educated unemployment, His Excellency, while admitting that Government had not yet formulated a definite policy in the matter, said that it was a vast problem which would tax fully the ingenuity of the new Ministry. Meanwhile, they were paving the way for a consideration of the problem by initiating a census of the unemployed.

His Excellency at the outset indicated that Lord Erskine would have to extend the life of the present Council which would expire on November 6 until the inauguration of the Reforms and that Government contemplated holding another session early in December.

## NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

**29th. AUGUST:—**The Council devoted the whole day to non-official business. The House decided to circulate for eliciting public opinion Mr. *Chowdary's Madras Land Alienation Bill*, which aimed at preventing alienation of agricultural land to non-agriculturists. Two other Bills were rejected, including the *Madras Employees' Protection Bill*, introduced by Mr. *Basu Dev*, purporting to ameliorate the condition of employees in certain directions.

The House unanimously adopted Mr. *Koti Reddi's* resolution recommending to Government to issue instructions to registration officers and others concerned to increase the number of polling stations so that ordinarily no voter need travel more than two miles to record his vote during the ensuing elections to the provincial legislatures.

## THE IMAM'S BILL

**1st. to 3rd. SEPTEMBER:—**The Council discussed for all these days and passed on the 3rd September the Imam's Bill which vested permanent occupancy rights on the tenants of Imam lands.

The Bill was discussed in the House twice before, once being returned by the Governor with recommendations and again by the Governor-General who withheld assent to it on the ground that the Bill was expropriatory. This time the Government introduced the same with a provision for compensation to Imamdars.

The measure had the support of the Congress members in the Council and their amendment reducing the amount of compensation from 2 and a half times the annual rent to only the annual rent was accepted by Government and adopted by the House. Another amendment seeking to exclude temples and charitable institutions from the operation of the Bill was defeated, Congress members and Government opposing it. The measure had the support of Zamindars and landlords of the Justice Party while members of the United Nationalist Party strongly opposed it.

The *Raja of Bobbili*, in the course of his speech prior to the passing of the Bill, said that he did not wish to take up the valuable time of the House at that late hour, but he wished only to state that if the legislation before the House was examined impartially, there could be no doubt that many concessions had been given to imamdars and that they had been placed in a certainly more favourable position than the landholders under the Madras Estates Land Act. Members of the House would no doubt be aware that as far as 'private land' was concerned, they had enlarged the categories of private land to which imamdars were allowed to lay claim. He had stated in his speech in 1933 that imamdars could not claim in their lands any greater rights than that which the zamindars or the original grantees of the imams possessed. It would be admitted on all sides that occupancy

went with the land and that the actual tiller of the soil was the owner of that right and that there could be no claim to occupancy right by the inamdar.

From time to time during the discussions, he said, the main issues had been skillfully confused by bringing in the case of smaller inamdars. He would like to make it clear that this Bill was intended to apply to whole inam villages and minor inams did not come within the purview of the legislation. There was also no force, he said, in the statement that inamdars were being deprived of legal rights which they now possessed.

Mr. T. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the speaker said, had laid great stress on the point that it had not been proved that inam tenants were worse off than Zemindari tenants or that there was need for any special relief or protection. He would state that the very fact that they were tenants at will and rent was liable to be enhanced was itself sufficient ground to say that, in this country, where the pressure on land was so heavy, the lot of the inam tenant could not possibly be an enviable one. As regards compensation, curious arguments were put forward on behalf of the inamdars. He would suggest that inamdars ought to realise that in this matter a special concession had been given to them for which, he said, there was no parallel in the Madras Estates Land Act.

"As regards compensation" the Raja of Bobbili stated, "it is not right to bring in the Land Acquisition Act; because in this case the so-called Kudivaram right is not a right which in my opinion, can be computed in terms of rupees. This is a right which, in our opinion, according to the principles of the land tenure in this country, cannot be recognised and for which no compensation is due. But I do not wish to go over the ground again or repeat the reasons as to why the provision had to be embodied in the Bill. Inamdars, I think, ought to be grateful for these special concessions which have been conceded to them. They have the additional right to eject tenants if, within a period of one year, the tenant either refuses or is unable to pay the compensation." It had been stated on the other side that this was of no advantage to them because after ejecting the tenants, the inamdar could not convert the land into private land. If it was remembered that the primary principle of the Bill was not to allow the enlargement of the categories of private land, there would be no foundation for the complaint.

Since inamdars had been given certain special rights, it was absolutely necessary to have special proofs and evidence.

In season and out of season, the speaker proceeding said, individuals had stated that this measure was really intended to hit the Brahmins.

Mr. T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar: I do not think any member said that it was aimed at the Brahmin Community. At any rate, no Brahmin member of the House said that. Such a serious allegation against the members of a community should not be made. I have been the person who took a good part of the time in the discussions and it was I that said that Non-Brahmins, who paid the fullest value, are the people who constituted the bulk of inamdars. I believe two or three years ago, the Chief Minister himself referred to this and quoted my speech.

The Raja of Bobbili: I am not making this serious allegation as Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar calls it, against the Brahmin community. I said we have been attacked on the ground that it is intended to hit the Brahmin community.

A voice: But he referred to "individuals".

The Raja of Bobbili said that this allegation was unfounded, because those speakers who championed the cause of inamdars had themselves stated that if a census were taken to-day of inamdars, it would be found that a majority of them were Non-Brahmins.

The other charge made was that inamdars were not represented in the Council. The speaker did not think their cause had suffered for want of advocacy.

Referring to Mr. O. K. Reddi's speech and his reference to clause (6), the Raja of Bobbili said that he was personally opposed to this provision from the start. Although Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar termed the benefits to inamdars under the Bill as illusory, he (the Raja of Bobbili) would not be surprised if this provision should make the safeguards given to inam tenants illusory. He hoped no such adverse results would ensue and he hoped also that the Government would in the future carefully consider the question of amending the Act in the direction necessary.

This piece of legislation had been sponsored and supported neither on political nor communal grounds but only in furtherance of the principles for which he and his party stood. And they would have the satisfaction, if it became law, as they

hoped it would, of having enfranchised nearly a million tenants at will in inam villages, thus enlarging the electorate.

Referring to Dr. Subbaroyan's remarks about the Government helping the forces of communism and socialism, he said that if communism and terrorism did not find a fruitful soil in this province, it was due to the fact that practically every member of the rural population had some interest or other in land. The principles of communism were totally opposed to individual ownership of land and it was to guard against all such political theories that they were supporting this measure which would, he said, not only give fixity of tenure but peace and contentment to a third of the agricultural population in estates. Dr. Subbaroyan, he said, threw a hint that the matters would not be left at this stage and that it would be carried to higher authorities. In this connection, he would point out that in 1933, Dr. Subbaroyan said that, as responsible members of the House, they ought to take the decisions of the House as binding and that he was against "safeguards". Now, after he had been transformed into a Congressman, Dr. Subbaroyan seemed to have changed his mental outlook and he now wished to take advantage of the "reserve powers" vested in the Governor and the Governor-General. He did not know whether Dr. Subbaroyan spoke on his own behalf or on that of the Congress. But, Dr. Subbaroyan occupied a position which he could not understand; for Dr. Subbaroyan belonged to the United Nationalist Party in the Council and to the Congress outside. At the same time, the Raja of Bobbili said, he was grateful to Mr. C. R. Reddi and his group who gave their support to this measure both by their votes and speeches and who "had the courage of their convictions."

Concluding, the Raja of Bobbili expressed appreciation of the great patience and tact with which the hon. the Revenue Member has piloted this measure, and of the services of Mr. M. G. Patnaik, who he said, had been of the greatest assistance in all stages of the measure. He hoped that the Bill would soon find a place on the statute book and be a lasting boon to the inam tenants.

#### RIVERS CONSERVANCY AMEND. BILL

Sir Charles Souter next introduced the bill (item 4) further to amend the Madras Rivers Conservancy Act 1884, and moved that it be taken into consideration at once.

The Revenue Member said that the Bill was a non-controversial one. The object was this. In view of the provisions of Section 296 of the Government of India Act 1935, the Acts in force in this Presidency had to be amended wherever necessary, in order to vest in the Board of Revenue, the appellate powers in revenue matters now exercised by the Governor-in-Council. It was therefore proposed in this Bill to vest in the Board of Revenue the appellate powers referred to in the proviso to Section 14 of the Madras Rivers Conservancy Act, 1884.

The motion was carried. The two clauses of the Bill were agreed to without a decision and the Bill was passed into law.

#### ELECTION TO BOARDS

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili next introduced the Bill further to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920 and the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920 and moved that it be taken into consideration.

The Chief Minister said that during the recent elections to local bodies, a number of instances had come to the notice of the Government in which courts had granted injunctions for restraining the conduct of elections to municipal councils and local boards. As would be seen from the statement of objects and reasons to the Bill, these injunctions had been granted mostly on allegations of the irregular omission or the irregular inclusion of the names of electors in the electoral rolls prepared in accordance with the rules framed for the purpose under the Madras District Municipalities Act or the Madras Local Boards Act. This caused considerable administrative inconvenience, as it had become possible for a few irresponsible persons to hold up an election or even an entire general election. The object of the Bill was to furnish a self-contained machinery for all matters connected with elections. It was therefore considered desirable to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act and the Madras Local Boards Act by including therein a specific provision prohibiting courts from granting injunctions for restraining proceedings which were being or were about to be taken under the rules for the preparation or publication of electoral rolls or for the conduct of elections.

Mr. Nachiyappa Gounder moved that the consideration of the Bill be adjourned *sine die*. Mr. Bakker Ahmed Sayeed moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

The motion that the consideration of the Bill be adjourned *sine die* was then put and lost. The motion that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion was also lost, and the motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was agreed. All the clauses of the Bill (three in number) were then passed without any discussion and formed part of the Bill. The *Raja of Bobbili* then moved that the Bill be passed into Law. The motion to pass the Bill into law was carried.

#### CHILDREN'S ACT AMENDING BILL

The hon. Mr. Pannirselvam introduced a Bill to-day to amend the Children's Act and moved that it be referred to a Select Committee.

The Law Member said that the object of the Bill was to make the Act more effective, by empowering the Court to commit a youthful offender, to the custody of a person who was not a relative of the child and by providing for his being produced before the Court by a person who had undertaken the custody of the offender, with a view to being sent to a certified school, should he fail to respond to care and treatment. The Bill also was intended, the Law Member said, to bring within its scope children who were subject to immoral influences.

The motion was carried and the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

#### MADRAS FAMINE RELIEF FUND

The hon. Sir Geoffrey Bracken next introduced a Bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Fund, called the Madras Famine Relief Fund, for utilisation on occasions of serious famine and of distress caused by serious drought, flood and other natural calamities. He moved that the Bill be considered at once.

Sir Geoffrey said that the principle of the Bill had been accepted by the House on a previous occasion unanimously; and the Devolution Rules had been amended suitably by the Secretary of State for India. He declared that the balance in the Fund in excess of Rs. 40 lakhs was proposed to be utilised on protective irrigation works and other famine relief works; and that the Revenue Member in the next session of the Legislative Council would come up before them with proposals for the utilisation of the excess amount.

The Bill, Sir Geoffrey said, was a simple measure to enable the Fund being invested in the securities of the Government of India. There was no need to refer it to a Select Committee, especially as delay would mean loss of interest. If the Government of India placed the money at their disposal, say, on the 1st of October, the Local Government would stand to gain in the current year a sum of Rs. 20,000, which was no negligible sum. They were still under the control of the Government of India. The new Government, when they come into being, would have a completely free hand. Instead of making amendments now, it would be much better to leave the matter to the new Government to change the purposes for which the money could be utilised and also the class of securities in which the money could be invested. He thought that it would be quite possible for the new Government, for example, if they wished, to invest the Fund in their own loans. He would, therefore, ask the members opposite not to press for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, but allow the Bill to be taken into consideration at once.

The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was next put and carried. Consideration of the clause of the Bill was taken up.

Clauses 1 to 6 were put and carried. Clause 7 was put. Mr. G. Rameshwar Rao moved an amendment to the effect, that the end of the financial year should not fall short of Rs. 100 lakhs. He also moved an amendment to insert a new proviso to the clause, to the effect, that the annual payment towards the deficiency should be in addition to the contribution referred to in Section 3. His idea, Mr. G. Rameshwar Rao said, was to make the annual contribution to the fund obligatory on the Government in view of the chronic famine conditions prevailing in large areas in the Presidency. He did not think the Secretary of State would at all stand in the way of their adopting such a step.

Mr. Gopalaswami Mudaliar, seconding the motion, said that enormous sums had been spent on relief of famine, but if only the Government had proceeded with the Tungabhadra project in right earnest, that would have saved a lot of money, while at the same time giving permanent relief to the affected area from famine. He hoped

that the proposed conference in regard to the Tungabhadra Project would result in some permanent good to the districts affected.

Mr. *Koti Reddi* moved that the sum be fixed at 'Rs. 75 lakhs' instead of 'Rs. 100 lakhs'.

Sir *Geoffrey Bracken* replied that he had great sympathy with the prudent financial provision which the members opposite had suggested in the amendment. He noticed that the amount of Rs. 40 lakhs was sought to be raised to varying figure from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 lakhs. In respect of this matter, there was no need to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State. But it was rather a matter in which they were committing the new Government. He would suggest that if they fixed the sum at Rs. 100 lakhs, they would be going far beyond the requirements. In recent years, the amount required for famine relief, never exceeded in one year Rs. 32 lakhs. It was the figure for Ganjam famine in 1920-21. Last year famine relief cost Rs. 17 lakhs. In this matter, he was prepared to be guided by the opinion of the House. If Rs. 40 lakhs provided for in the Bill was not felt to be sufficient, he was prepared to suggest Rs. 50 lakhs. They could leave it to the new Government to raise it, if they liked.

The House eventually agreed to amend the figure Rs. 40 lakhs into Rs. 50 lakhs. As a consequential amendment in the same clause, the annual contribution to be made by the Government was raised from Rs. 3 lakhs into Rs. 5 lakhs. The amendment was put to the House and carried. Clause 7 as amended then formed part of the Bill.

The Preamble was then allowed to stand part of the Bill. The hon. Sir *Geoffrey Bracken* then moved that the Bill as amended be passed into Law. The motion was carried without discussion and the Bill was passed into law. The House at this stage adjourned.

#### DR. MUNICIPALITIES ACT AMEND. BILL

4th. SEPTEMBER :—The hon. the *Raja of Bobbili* introduced a Bill to-day further to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920, for certain purposes and moved that it be taken into consideration.

In the "Objects and Reasons", it was stated that doubts had been raised as to the validity of bye-laws made by certain municipalities levying charges on the 'tap rate' system for water consumed in excess of the maximum free allowance. The object of the Bill, it was stated, was to validate all by-laws, orders and agreements based on the 'tap rate' system which had been made, issued or entered into before the provisions of the measure came into effect.

The hon. the *Raja of Bobbili*, introducing the Bill and moving that it be taken into consideration, said that it was found expensive and inconvenient to adopt a uniform system of metering and on this account, the Government recently sanctioned, at the request of certain municipalities, the levy of water tax at particular rates per tap. This system, he said, was working satisfactorily in a number of municipalities. The question was recently raised if the levy of a tax on a tap-rate system was consistent with the provisions of the Act. On the other hand, the opinion had been expressed that the question of free supply would arise only in the case of public taps, and where private connections were given to houses, it would be open to municipal authorities to levy a tax. To remove all doubts in the matter, he said, after taking legal opinion, the Government had decided to move the Bill. The Bill would enable municipal councils to frame by-laws from time to time on the tap-rate system.

Mr. *Basheer Ahmed Sayeed* moved that the Bill be referred to a select committee. The motion to refer the Bill to a select committee was put and lost.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 were then passed without discussion. Clause 4 dealt with the question of payment for water supplied.

Mr. *Sayeed* moved an amendment, to the effect, that water should be supplied free to certain classes of buildings. He stated that the object of his amendment was that water should be supplied free to temples, churches and mosques. In the city, it was so. There had been an agitation on the part of worshippers of certain municipalities against the levy of water charges. There was justification, he added, for exempting these places of worship from payment. If an outright exemption could not be granted, he would request the Government to give liberty to municipalities to prescribe the number and classes of buildings to which free supply could be given. The loss of income would not be much.

Mr. *Hamid Khan* suggested that the following proviso be inserted at the end of Clause 4 (b) to meet the wishes of all sides: "Provided that no water charges be leviable on places of public worship."

VILLAGE COURTS BILL

The House next accepted the motion of the Hon. Mr. A. T. Panathuram that the Bill to further amend the Madras Village Courts Act, 1886 for certain purposes be referred to a select committee. The Bill *inter-alia* seeks to provide for the election by panchayat courts of a Vice-President for the purpose of exercising the functions of the President when the office of the President becomes vacant or when the president is absent from jurisdiction or is incapacitated and to make a consequential change in the definition of 'Village Munsiff.' The Bill also gives a definition of 'movable property' as including growing crops or products, and makes provision for the transfer of pending proceedings from one village or panchayat court to another where there is a change in the limits of jurisdiction or on the disestablishment of the court.

DT. MUNICIPALITIES ACT AMEND. BILL

The Hon the *Raja of Bobbili* next introduced a Bill further to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act for certain purposes and moved that it be taken into consideration.

The object of the Bill, he said, was to raise the maximum limit of the pay of the Commissioner of the Madura Municipality from Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,200. In view of the size and importance of the Madura municipality, he said, the Government considered necessary and desirable to appoint a Commissioner with larger administrative experience. The present maximum, he said, restricted the choice for the commissionership.

Mr. *Nachiyappa Gounder* moved that the further consideration of the Minister's motion be adjourned *sine die*. He said that the maximum of Rs. 800 now provided for in the Act was quite an adequate amount for a Commissioner of even a Municipality of the size of Madura. The present state of municipal finances could not permit of a salary of more than Rs. 800 being given. Moreover, it must be remembered that the Madura Municipal Council, which had to find funds for the staff, had passed a resolution against the proposal for increasing the Commissioner's salary. If the salary was raised to Rs. 1,200 as proposed in the Bill, the commitment of the Municipality would come to Rs. 1,500 if pensionary contribution, leave allowance, etc., were taken into consideration.

The Hon. the *Raja of Bobbili* said it was not proposed straightaway to appoint a person on the salary suggested. The Commissioner who would be appointed would be a person already in Government service. The Bill only sought to empower the Government to appoint the officer contemplated by it. Mr. Koti Reddi's argument appeared to him as novel. He had stated that the salary and status of the Commissioner should not depend on the size and population but should depend upon the hours of work. This argument he could not accept. The Government considered that this measure was essential in the interests of the Madura Municipality.

Mr. *Nachiyappa Gounder* said that a revenue divisional officer on Rs. 800 would be able to satisfy the requirements of the Madura Municipality. To appoint a person on Rs. 1,200 would be a great burden on the Municipality.

The amendment of Mr. *Nachiyappa Gounder* was after discussion lost.

The clauses of the Bill were agreed to without discussion. Clause 2 of the Bill runs as follows :—

In clause (a) of sub-section (6) of section 12-C of the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920, for the words 'not exceeding eight hundred rupees per mensem in the aggregate', the words 'not exceeding in the aggregate, one thousand two hundred rupees per mensem in the case of the Madura Municipality and eight hundred rupees per mensem in the case of any other municipality,' shall be substituted.

The Hon. the *Raja of Bobbili* moved that the Bill be passed into law. The Bill was passed into law.

CITY POLICE ACT AMEND. BILL

The *Home Member* then presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill to amend the Madras City Police Act and moved that the Bill, as reported by the Committee, be taken into consideration.

The motion was carried and the House took up the consideration of the Bill clause by clause.

There were no amendments to clauses and these were all allowed to stand part of the Bill.

The Bill was then passed into law, on the motion of the *Home Member*.



## DR. POLICE ACT AMEND. BILL

The hon. Mr. C. F. Brackenbury next presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Madras District Police Act 1859 and moved that the measure as amended by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

The object of the Bill is to bring out clearly the intention of the Indian Police Act, 1861 in the matter of setting up two categories of police officers, the superior category of officers embracing the Inspector-General, the Deputy Inspector-General, and all other superior officers down to Deputy Superintendents of Police and an inferior category embracing all ranks from Inspector downwards. Another object of the Bill is to amend the provisions of the Act in respect of the imposition of fines, etc., with a view to recovering from the pay of the police officer concerned the whole or part of any pecuniary loss caused to the Government by negligence or breach of orders.

Amendments given notice of were not moved. The clauses of the Bill were accepted without any discussion and the Bill was passed into law.

## MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMEND. BILL

The hon. the *Raja of Bobbili* then presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bill to amend the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931, for certain purposes and moved that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee be taken into consideration. The Bill was passed.

## BORSTAL SCHOOL AMEND. BILL

On the motion of the hon. Mr. A. T. Pannirselvam, the Bill to amend the Madras Borstal School's Act was taken into consideration and passed.

## FIRST OFFENDERS' BILL

The hon. Mr. Pannirselvam next moved that the Bill to provide for the release on probation of first offenders be referred to a Select Committee.

The object of the Bill was to introduce the probation system for first offenders in the city of Madras and a few selected mofussil areas.

The motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was put to the House and carried.

## DR. MUNICIPALITIES AMEND. BILL (CONTD.)

The house then took up for consideration the amendment of Mr. *Basheer Ahmed* in regard to the free supply of water to places of public worship moved in connection with clause 4 of the Bill to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act, the consideration of which was adjourned to enable an agreed amendment being moved.

Mr. *Basheer Ahmed* stated that after consultation with the *Raja of Bobbili* and other members of the House, he agreed to his amendment being dropped. In its place, he moved an amendment to the Explanation to Sub-Section 2 of Section 31 of the Act. The amendment was to the effect that the words 'tanks in and near mosques, temples etc.' be removed from the explanation. He said that if those words were removed, it would have the effect of giving exemption to places of worship from payment of any charge for consumption of water.

The *Raja of Bobbili* accepted the amendment stating that it did not give any wholesale exemption to religious institutions in a municipality, but only made it possible for those institutions which deserved special treatment to be given free supply of water.

The amendment was then put to the House and carried.

Clause 4 as amended was next put to the House and agreed to.

The *Raja of Bobbili* then moved that the Bill as amended be passed into law.

The House adopted this motion without discussion and the Bill was passed into law.

The House then adjourned *sine die*.

## December Session—Madras—30th November to 4th. December 1936

## OFFICIAL BILLS AND MOTIONS

The last session of the Council under the Montford Constitution commenced at Madras on the 30th November 1936, Mr. *Ramakrishna Reddi* presiding.

The *Law Member* presented reports of the select committees on the Bills further to amend the *Madras Children's Act, 1920*, the *Madras Village Courts Act* and also the *Madras Probation of Offenders Bill*. The clauses of these Bills having been considered, the Bills were introduced into Council and were passed into laws.

**1st. DECEMBER :—**Discussion on the motion by the *Minister of Development* regarding an increase in the Government guarantee in respect of debentures issued by the Central Land Mortgage Bank had not concluded yesterday—but was passed to-day—when the adjournment motion, of which notice had been given by Mr. *Koti Reddi* was taken up. The motion related to the Government Order issued on October 21 regarding the grant of land revenue concessions for the current *faisl* in so far as it related to the refusal of Government to grant any general remission of dry assessment and any general concession in the matter of water cess.

Speakers pleaded that some concessions having been shown to dry lands similar concessions should be shown to wet lands. It was also stated that ryots raising crops on dry lands were not so prosperous as those that raised crops on wet lands.

Sir *Charles Souter*, the Revenue Member, explained the policy of Government in regard to this question and said that he could not accept the resolution. The motion was however put and carried.

Mr. *Subramania Bhatta* gave notice of a motion asking for the adjournment of the Legislature "to discuss the recent action of the Local Government against Congress workers canvassing for Congress candidates in connexion with the ensuing elections to the local legislature in Malabar and elsewhere in the Presidency."

The Government raising no objection, the President admitted the adjournment motion to discuss the Government's order of Oct. 21 regarding the grant of land revenue concessions for current *Faisl* so far as it related to the Government's refusal to grant any general remission on dry assessment and any general concession in the matter of the water cess.

The motion was put and carried without division. The *Revenue Member* replying to the debate explained the Government's policy in the matter. The House then adjourned.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

**2nd. DECEMBER :—**To-day, after interpellations, Mr. *P. V. Krishnayya Choudhri* (the Council's Secretary) moved an adjournment motion to discuss the steps taken by the Local Government to deal with the situation arising from the recent cyclone which devastated Guntur District.

Mr. *Abdul Hamid Khan* : May I know if it is the practice or if it is permitted by statute that the Secretary to the Council can raise a motion for adjournment of the House?

The *President* : I do not think that there is any objection either by convention or by statute to the Secretary to the Council moving a motion for adjournment of the House. No doubt it is a peculiar thing, this being the first time that we have come across such a motion. On that account, however, I do not think it can be disallowed.

Sir *Charles Souter* said he had no objection and the President allowed the discussion.

The motion was withdrawn after the *Revenue Member* had enumerated the steps taken by the Government and had assured the House that everything would be done to alleviate the distress of the people.

Replying to a question regarding the steps the Government had taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Unemployment Committee, the *Home Member* stated that at the instance of the Government of India, this Government was considering the question of revising the educational system of the province with a view to reducing the number of persons taking up University courses and diverting a majority of students to courses of study which qualify them for a profession or trade. The question of revising the curriculum of elementary schools was also engaging the attention of the Government.

#### BUTTER-MILK TO PRISONERS

**3rd. DECEMBER :—**There was an interesting discussion in the Council to-day regarding the supply of butter milk to all prisoners. The question was raised by a cut motion when the *Law Member* moved supplementary grant of Rs. 17,07,00 on account of jails and convict settlements.

Replying, the *Law Member* said that one lakh of rupees would be required for the purpose and if the money could be found, he was sure that the authorities would give the best consideration to the matter. The cut motion was rejected.

GOVERNOR'S

Later, H. E. the Governor drove in State to the Council Chamber and addressed the House for the last time before the elections.

Addressing the Council *Lord Brabine*, the Governor, said that unless something quite unexpected occurred this would be the final sitting of the Council.

"To-day is therefore a land-mark in the political history of the Presidency for on the next occasion that a representative body assembles in this chamber it will meet under a different constitution and be charged with even greater responsibilities.

"So far as my Government are concerned, arrangements preliminary to the introduction of the new Constitution have been completed or are nearing completion. In the matter of elections to the Provincial Legislature the electoral rolls have been published and returning officers are engaged in working out details of arrangements for the conduct of polling and of such measures as are necessary to prevent any form of rowdiness or intimidation.

"Government servants", continued His Excellency, "have already been made aware of the duty laid upon them of strict impartiality in the conduct of the elections but at the same time I desire to make it perfectly clear that Government will in no circumstances tolerate propaganda disguised under the cloak of electioneering for the subversion of Government as by law established. Further instructions will be issued in due course to all Government servants to the effect that while not interfering with legitimate electioneering activities, they should neglect no precaution against organized lawlessness and intimidation and not hesitate to act promptly and vigorously against any organization or individual attempting to interfere with free and orderly conduct of the elections. Indeed the sole aim of my Government will be to see that voters may be able freely to exercise their franchise, without fear of violence or threats from any quarter."

His Excellency made particular reference to the subject of elementary education. He said he had been struck with the fact that of the very large sums which Government spends annually on elementary education a considerable proportion had been thrown away on inefficient schools while efficient schools had not received the full encouragement they deserved.

"This state of affairs is to be remedied. Summarised briefly Government's policy will be to withdraw support from schools which are inefficient, incomplete and uneconomical and, at the same time, to give increased support to schools which come up to the required standards. Hand in hand with these measures will be a real endeavour to improve the conditions of service of elementary teachers."

His Excellency concluded: I feel every confidence that moderation and prudence will continue to prevail in the Presidency and that the conduct of future governments and legislatures will be such as to ensure ordered progress in our affairs to the great advantage of the whole population.

4th. DECEMBER:—To-day being the last day of the session eloquent tributes were paid to the President for the manner in which he had conducted the deliberations of the Council for six long years. Speakers including *Sir K. V. Reddi*, leader of the House, *Mr. P. T. Rajan*, Development Minister and others referred to his impartiality, patience, great tact and, above all, pleasant humour.

*Mr. Rameshendra Reddi*, the President thanked the speakers for their kind words. At the conclusion of the business the President read a message from the Governor, *proroguing* the Council.

# THE N. W. F. PR. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

November Session—Peshawar—9th to 21st November 1936

## ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Khan Bahadur *Abdur Rahim*, nominated President of the Frontier Council since February was unanimously elected to the Chair when the Council opened for its last session at Peshawar on the 9th. November 1936. As soon as the Governor's approval was received, the *Home Member* conveyed the message of congratulations from the Governor to Khan Bahadur *Abdur Rahim* on being the first elected President of the Council. Occupying the Chair, Khan Bahadur *Abdur Rahim* assured that he would hold the scales even between all parties and sections.

## OFFICIAL BILLS

After the election of the President, the House passed the elected *President's Salary Bill* and the *Punjab alienation of land act frontier provinces amendment Bill* which aimed to prevent fruit-bearing trees from attachment.

## THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

His Excellency Sir *Ralph Griffith*, the Governor next addressed the Council for the last time. In doing so, His Excellency said:—

"The forthcoming elections will be contested by all parties and I take this opportunity to say that the participation therein by the *Khudai Khidmatgar* party is welcomed by the Government, but that participation must be on constitutional lines for it is upon this condition that the Government agreed to suspend the ban that exists in this province upon the Congress.

This condition was fulfilled, that party and its leaders will enjoy the same share of political life in the province, as is the right, under the constitution, of all parties. Some of that party will be returned as members of the new Assembly and may either form or help to form the ministerial party or may occupy seats now occupied in this Council by the opposition. If the latter proves to be the case, then I would remind them of the convention whereby the British Opposition comes to be styled His Majesty's Opposition. The Ministry that will conduct and be responsible for the Government of this province will be the leaders of the party which commands or of parties which command a majority of votes of the electorate. That Government will be faced with opposition and criticism within this Council Chamber, but that opposition and that criticism must be conducted just as the Government itself will be conducted on constitutional lines. There is no place in the constitution for non-co-operation which, whatever form it may take, can only be interpreted as a challenge which must and will be met."

Reviewing the progress during the four and half years of his tenure as Governor, which was coincident with the life of the Council, His Excellency characterised the period as a most important stage in the constitutional development of the province and expressed satisfaction with the Council's notable achievements. Recounting the Legislative enactments vis-a-vis the prosperity and welfare of the rural population, His Excellency the Governor said that the Government were considering a bill on the lines of the acts placed upon the Statute book in other provinces for setting up Debt Conciliation Committees. This, however, was a measure that still required further examination and would have to await consideration of the new ministry. Alluding to beneficent activities His Excellency said that despite financial stringency the expenditure of these departments had risen from Rs. 28,10,000 in 1931-32 to Rs. 34,43,000 in 1936-37.

The Governor recalled the words of advice which Lord Willingdon addressed to members of this Council on the occasion of its inauguration to the effect that they should beware of being tempted into hasty or precipitate courses. Looking back upon these four and a half years, he could say with full assurance that those words of advice had borne good fruit. "It can, I think, be said, that you have not been tempted into hasty or precipitate courses and I believe that, when the time comes, as it will come within the next few months to raise the superstructure upon founda-

tions that you have laid, it will be seen that those foundations have been well and truly laid. That in itself is no mean achievement on the part of the Council which came last into the field of reforms, and whose existence covered a brief span of but four and half years. But that is not your only achievement. This Council came into existence at one of the most troubled and stormy periods in the history of the Province. At no time were qualities of moderation, and sanity of thought and outlook more necessary than they were then. These qualities have, I am glad to say, been shown to a degree and with consistency that have not only won for this Council warm approval of other provinces but have in no small measure contributed to orderly and ordered progress that this province has made along the path of constitutional progress.

His Excellency also referred to their kinsmen across the border. He said the record of these past four and half years is, for all its disappointments and hopes unrealised, not one that we need reproach ourselves with. There has been peace and order within that province and friendly and neighbourly relations which has been maintained between inhabitants of it and their kinsmen who live across its borders. Upon the maintenance of peace and of these good relations must, in main, depend not only the happiness and contentment of the people but also the success of any measures that may be taken to improve and ameliorate their economic lot. Conversely nothing can do more to retard progress, whether social, political or economic, than disorder and disrespect for authority. "For that reason I rejoice that our feet are now firmly placed upon the path of orderly and constitutional progress and we can look forward to the future, confident in our now tried and proved capacity for Self-Government."

#### GOVERNOR'S SPEECH CRITICISED

**11th. NOVEMBER :—**"The announcement to suspend the ban upon Congress Party shows a change in the Government angle of vision and, to my mind, is a happy augury for the province. The reassurance, in the address, of the strict neutrality of the Government and its officers in the impending elections would have dispelled certain misunderstandings which are being created by the activities of some interested people," said *Malik Khuda Bakhsh*, leader of the Opposition in the Council commenting on the Governor's address. He regretted that all the absorbing problems of unemployment found no place in the address, nor did the Governor refer to the Shariat Act, which stood in history as a monumental non-official achievement. His Excellency had not taken the House into his confidence as to the steps which the Government had taken or proposed taking to save the province from a financial crisis which may any day overtake it on account of the top-heavy administration. The most noteworthy feature of the address, however, was that it succeeded in thoroughly vindicating the introduction of reforms in the Frontier, thereby setting at naught the misgivings of those reactionaries who have been wasting time and energy to prove the backwardness and incapacity of the Frontier people to run parliamentary institutions.

#### RELEASE OF KHAN ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN

**12th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council rejected by 20 votes against 8, Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum's* resolution recommending to the Government to remove all restrictions on Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and to allow him unconditional entry into the Frontier and unconditional participation in the coming elections to the Provincial Assembly.

Moving the resolution, Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum* attributed the grant of reforms to the sacrifices of Mr. Gaffar Khan's party and appealed that he should be allowed to come to reap the fruit of his struggle. He was the only person who could control his party in and outside the Council. Their efforts would be to build a strong Government and bring peace and tranquility to the Province. Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum* critically analysing the Governor's address to the Council said, "There is no justification for retaining the ban on Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khan. If the Government want certain conditions to be fulfilled, it is all the more necessary that that leader should be here."

Mr. *Ghulam Rabbani*, opposing the resolution, said that the removal of the ban would be detrimental to the peace and tranquility of the province and was surprised that the resolution should have been moved at all by lawyers who were members of the House that enacted the law whereunder the order was served on Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khan.

Mr. *Pir Baksh*, giving the fullest support to the resolution, said that Mr. Gaffar Khan was decidedly a patriot who served his country and whose aim was to organise

the people for their welfare. He said that it was expected that on the expiry of his term of sentence, Mr. Gaffar Khan would be allowed to visit his kith and kin just as other leaders in India had been allowed and asked if this ban was based on statesmanship, strict legal provisions and the constitution. If Mr. Khan's presence could not be prejudicial to the interests of peace and tranquility of other provinces where he was at present staying, the speaker was at a loss to understand how his activities would affect peace in the frontier. Examining the Governor's address critically, he said that the continuance of the ban was going against the most recent announcement of the Governor.

Mr. *Aurangzeb* said that the Governor's address to which Opposition members made references was not an unilateral agreement. The Governor had made a generous gesture and there must be some response from the other party. He suggested that it would be in the interest of the province that the resolution was withdrawn whereafter the Government might consider the situation.

Mr. *Malik Khuda Baksh* said that Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khan's whole life was devoted to the preaching of non-violence in accordance with the teachings of Islam. The onus of proving justification of the order against him lay on the Government. They could institute proceedings in a court of law and give Mr. Khan an opportunity to defend himself.

*Nawab Hamidullah* said that there was no necessity for the resolution because Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khan had not committed any offence for which he was turned out of his country, in reality he was doing something which the Government considered improper. If he wanted to come back, he could settle terms with the Government.

Opposing the resolution, Mr. *Gidney*, Home Member, wished, without rancour, to place before the House certain facts since it had been claimed Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khan was an apostle of non-violence. He reminded the House of those scenes of intimidation that took place in Charsadda and Mardan during the last elections when things went to such an extent in one constituency that only three voters had courage to go to the polling station. Was freedom of franchise allowed to their opponents on that occasion? Their sole aim and object was to wreck the constitution by mass intimidation and render the holding of elections impossible. It was the Government's firm intention that there should be no repetition of those scenes of violence.

Mr. *Gidney* traced the history of Mr. Gaffar Khan's activities and referred to the invitation extended to him by the Chief Commissioner in 1931 to attend the Darbar where the announcement regarding reforms was made. There was no reply to that invitation and none had been received since. On the other hand, Mr. Khan and his party would have no co-operation with the Government, as the reforms were inadequate. Nothing short of independence would satisfy him and his party. So the Government was compelled to take action and suppress an insurrectionary movement. Then the time came when the Government thought that the interment of its leaders was no longer necessary. Even then there was no desire on the part of Gaffar Khan to co-operate with the Government. On the contrary the first thing he did to signalise his release was to make a speech for which he was prosecuted by the Bombay Government. Without some declaration from Mr. Khan, the Government could not be expected to agree to his unconditional release.

The Home Member repeated the Governor's declaration in his address suspending the ban on Khudai Khidmatgars (Red Shirts) if they desired to contest the elections on constitutional lines. There had been no removal of the ban. It had been suspended subject to certain conditions on the fulfilment to which would depend its continuance. Referring to the recent activities of Congress leaders in the province in connection with the Peshawar District Board elections, the Home Member said that there was an attempt to revive semi-military or military formations. Speeches were made demanding complete independence and freedom from slavery of Ferangi. He quoted from several speeches characterising them of military tone and said that it was an amazing assertion that the reforms were due to Mr. Gaffar Khan's activities. He said he could hardly imagine a more startling or more unfounded statement.

Continuing, the Home Member said that these speeches could hardly be claimed as harmless matter for an election campaign. They were being prepared not for a constitutional struggle but for a war of independence to which they resorted in 1930-31. There were continued references to the struggle for independence and Mr. *Gidney* denied that the situation had changed. He asked if these extracts did not show that they were calculated to excite hatred and contempt against the Government and revive that old war mentality. What the Government wished to know was

why these speeches showed consistent determination to rouse the people against the constitution and not to prepare them to work it. If the object was to wreck the constitution both inside and outside the Legislature, who could say that we would not have the disorders that took place in 1930-31, which were a disgrace to the name of the province.

The *Home Member*, in conclusion, foreshadowed action against certain speakers in the District Board election campaign, who had indulged in sedition.

Replying to the debate, Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum* asked whether the aspirations of the nation for independence was a crime. If so, every inhabitant of the province had committed that crime. Continuing Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum* asked how an organisation of unarmed non-violent and peaceful persons could fight against the Government forces. He reminded the *Home Member* of the Fascist marchers in London and asked if they put them in jail and sent them to Malta. He reiterated that non-violence was the faith and religion of Mr. *Abdul Gaffar Khan*.

#### NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTION

The House then passed without much discussion Mr. *Pir Baksh's* resolution recommending the handing over to the Muslim community of the *Serai Jehanabad* popularly known as *Gorkhatri*, which was in the possession of the Government.

The *Home Member* said that the Government neither accepted nor opposed the resolution until they had examined the original documents.

#### MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION BILL

**14th. NOVEMBER :—**On the motion of Mr. *Gidney* the Council took up to-day the consideration, by 21 against 8 votes, of the Motor Vehicles Taxation Bill as reported by the select committee, after three hours' debate, in which nine speakers participated. Mr. *Gidney* said that the Government accepted the select committee's recommendation to carefully go into the whole matter and consider whether some relief in local taxation or some alteration in the method of imposition was not required. He added that the Government could not forego its right to impose tax which was not only found in every province in India but in all countries of the world. There would be an increase of one lakh ten thousand in revenue if the Bill was accepted.

The *Legal Remembrancer*, *Sardar Rajasingh* said that the charge made by municipalities was that of rent. It could be avoided by having private motor stands.

The House then proceeded to discuss the Bill's clauses.

*Malik Khuda Baksh's* attempt to achieve exclusion of motor vehicles plied or let for hire from the operation of the Bill failed, his amendment to that effect being rejected by 20 against 7 votes. He then attempted to get reduction of the rates proposed, but with no success.

**17th. NOVEMBER :—**By 20 votes against 5, the Council passed the Motor Vehicles Taxation Bill to-day. All amendments aiming at reduction of the rate of taxation proposed were defeated. The Bill was rejected last year and reconsidered by the Council on the Governor's recommendation.

*Malik Khuda Baksh* and Mr. *Pir Baksh* moved several amendments aiming to reduce the rate of taxation proposed by the Bill.

The movers and their supporter, Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum*, and all members of the Independent Party took the opportunity to ventilate the grievances of lorry-owners and stress the injustice of the taxation proposed but received no support from other sections of the House. Owing to their hopeless minority, the Opposition could not get through any amendment.

Mr. *Gidney*, Finance Member, could not claim that the Bill was perfect. If experience proved that its provisions operated unfairly, he was certain that the next Government would consider what alterations to make. The object of the assessment of Rs. 500 for vehicles of over 32 passengers seating accommodation, was to discourage heavy vehicles on roads, as they were dangerous. The Finance Member said that the Bill's object was to increase the local resources to find money for beneficent schemes hitherto withheld.

*Sardar Rajasingh*, Legal Remembrancer, opposed the amendments and explained the Government's inability to accept them.

One clause in the schedule imposing a tax of Rs. 5 on vehicles adapted and used for invalids was deleted as the Finance Member accepted *Malik Khuda Baksh's* amendment to that effect.

### ARMS FOR FRONTIER PEOPLE

**19th. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed a non-official resolution to-day recommending the reversal of the present policy of gradually disarming the people of the Frontier Province and to allow them an adequate number of licensed arms for protection of their person and property.

Opposing the resolution, the *Home Member* refuted the statement that the policy of disarming was the first fruit of the Reforms and the result of the disorders of 1930-31. Though heavy disarming was made in that year, there had been no appreciable disarming since. As for the necessity for arms for villages on the border, the *Home Member* said that they no longer had raids and the inhabitants lived peacefully but reserve rifles could be easily issued if the necessity arose.

### THE HAZARA FOREST BILL

**21st. NOVEMBER :—**The Council passed the Hazara Forest Bill to-day, which consolidates and amends the law relating to reserved forests and waste land in the Hazara District. The effect of Sir *Abdul Qaiyum's* amendment which was carried was that the Government would be unable to constitute new reserved forests. Another amendment aiming to make the reserved forest and property of village landowners was defeated by 16 to 7 votes. The House then adjourned *sine die*.

# The Burma Legislative Council

August Session—Rangoon—11th. to 19th. August 1936

### THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

For the first time since his assumption of office, the Governor (Sir Archibald Cochrane) addressed the Burma Legislative Council, the last session of which commenced at Rangoon on the 11th. August 1936.

The Governor, saying farewell to the Council, the first session of which was held in 1923, said that a life of 13 years was a short time in which to gain experience for the wider responsibilities and more difficult tasks which would fall under the new Constitution on the shoulders of the Ministers and members of the new legislature. Referring to agricultural produce, the Governor felt that a conference of representatives from the Agricultural Department, growers, millers and merchants would be of value in ensuring as far as possible the line of development best suited to maintain the position of Burma rice in the export markets. He proposed to arrange for such a conference in the immediate future.

Considering the question of the respective rights of landlords and tenants, His Excellency said that the Bill of 1927 which sought legislative control was now being altered so as to adapt it to the conditions of to-day.

Regarding co-operative societies, the Governor observed that there was wide field for co-operative effort, including the marketing of the various crops. If a co-operative society undertook to market the crops of its members, it should be able to grade better and deliver to mill or merchant more cheaply than cultivators thus securing better prices and improving the position of the members.

### THATHANBAING'S JURISDICTION BILL

**12th. AUGUST :—**In the Council to-day over a thousand Buddhist monks assembled round about the Council building to hear the fate of *C. P. Khin Maung's* Bill for the restoration of the rights of the Buddhist religious hierarchy known as the *Thathanbaing's Jurisdiction Bill*.

Special police parties were posted as a precautionary measure. The Visitors' Gallery was also packed. The Bill was not introduced in view of divided opinion.



13th. AUGUST :—Questions cross-questions and angry retorts followed in the Burma Council to-day between the *Forest Minister* and *U. Ba. Thein* when the latter moved a resolution recommending to the Government to promote industrial progress in Burma by setting up model factories and mills.

*U Ba Thein* was warned by the President twice for interrupting, heckling and making allegations against the Forest Minister, while the Minister was speaking. The President told *U Ba Thein* that if he interrupted again he should have to exercise his powers to take disciplinary action.

The resolution was carried by 32 to 30 votes.

15th. AUGUST :—In the Council to-day, the President allowed *U. Ba Saw's* adjournment motion to discuss the arrest of *U Pomya*, who was arrested last night by the Rangoon Police on a warrant issued by the District Magistrate, Kyaukpyun, in connection with a rice theft case there. He was released on bail.

The *Finance Member*, opposing the motion, stated that the law did not indicate protection to a member from criminal prosecution. He protested that the matter was not of public importance. Quoting Council rules, he asserted that the House was prohibited from discussing any matter under adjudication by a Court of Law.

The President allowed the motion strictly on the ground that discussion would be confined only to the privileges of members who sought protection of the House from criminal arrest and stated that no criticism should be made against the Magistrate who issued the warrant as well as no reference to the merits or demerits of the present case.

With the approval of His Excellency the Governor, *U Ba Saw* moved adjournment of the House to discuss the general principle concerning the privilege of M. L. C.'s regarding the arrest under Criminal warrant. He was strongly supported by ten speakers including *U Kathaka Pomva* from different Burmese parties who urged amendment of the Cr. P. O. providing exemption from arrest under criminal process for M. L. C.'s and contended that by the present case the dignity of the House and the rights and privileges of M. L. C.'s were lowered. They argued that the purpose could have been served by issuing summons instead of warrant.

The *Finance Member* was frankly sorry that such a thing should have befallen a fellow member and said the rights and privileges of M. L. C.'s and the dignity of the House were precisely those conferred on them by law which conferred no privileges in respect of a criminal offence. Dignity could not be secured by prohibitions and threats, it was secured by actual merits of the Council itself. Even in Parliament there was no privilege for criminal offences.

The *Home Member* opined that in view of the law as it stood at present nothing could be done. The motion was talked out.

#### NO-CONFIDENCE ON MINISTER

18th. AUGUST :—In the Council to-day the no-confidence motion against the *Forest Minister*, which was moved by *U Kyaw Din* (ex-Education Minister) instead of *U Mya*, was lost by 42 votes to 34. The European group and a few Indians remained neutral.

The mover asserted that the House had already expressed no-confidence in the Minister by rejecting his Opium Smoking Bill. He alleged that on previous occasions when the Minister had been asked to lay down his policy he had indulged in personal attacks against some members. The mover was supported by five Burmese speakers, while two members of the Forest Minister's party vehemently opposed the motion. They pointed out that constitutional practices had not been followed on an earlier occasion.

Mr. G. G. Wodehouse, on behalf of the European group, wanted a clear designation of the ex-Minister's policy of subvention for local industries. The latter explained that he had no policy. He had followed precedents in the light of proposals of the industrial finance committee as recommended by *ad hoc* committees.

19th. AUGUST :—The Council was prorogued to-day after the conclusion of official business. The Acting Finance Member, bidding farewell to dyarchy, regretted that the people did not make the best use of it and he hoped that they would do better in future and wished 'godspeed' to the new Constitution.

# MEMBERS AND OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

## *President*

**SRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**

## *Ex-Presidents*

1. **SRI M. K. GANDHI**
2. **PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA**
3. **SRI C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR**
4. **SHRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU**
5. **SRI SHRINIVAS IYENGAR**
6. **MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD**
7. **SRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL**
8. **SRI RAJENDRA PRASAD**

## *1. Ajmer*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

9. **SYT. SAEED RAZMI**
10. **SYT. BHAI KOTWAL**
11. **PROF. GOKUL LAL ASANA**
12. **SRI SHANKERLAL VERMA**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President—SYT. BHAI KOTWAL*  
*Secretary—SYT. SHANKERLAL VERMA*  
*Treasurer—SYT. BISHAMBHAR NATH BHARGAVA*

## *2. Andhra*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

13. **SYT. T. PRAKASH**
14. **SYT. B. SAMBAMURTI**
15. **SYT. BEKWADE GOPALAREDDI**
16. **SYT. DANDU NARAYANARAJU**
17. **SYT. TENETTI VISWANADHAM**
18. **DR. BHOGARAJU PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA**
19. **SYT. MADDURI ANNAPURNIAH**
20. **SYT. KALA VENKATARAO**
21. **SYT. K. NAAGESHWAR RAO**
22. **SYT. A. KALESHWAR RAO**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President—SYT. T. PRAKASH*  
*General Secretary—SYT. B. SAMBAMURTI*  
*Treasurer—SYT. T. VISWANADHAM*

## *3. Assam*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

23. **SYT. BRINURAM MEDHI**
24. **SYT. OMBO KUMAR DAS**
25. **SYT. RAJENDRA NATH BORUA**
26. **SYT. MAHENDRA MOHAN CHAUDHARY**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President & Treasurer—SYT. SIDDHI-NATH SARKA*

## *4. Bihar*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

27. **SYT. RAMDATALU SINHA**
28. **SYT. AWADESHWAR PRASAD SINGH**
29. **SYT. SWAMI SANJANAND SARASWATI**
30. **SYT. BIPIN BIHARI VARMA**
31. **SYT. SATYA NARAYAN SINHA**
32. **SYT. SRI KRISHNA SINHA**
33. **SYT. RAMKRISHNA SINHA**
34. **SYT. ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINHA**
35. **SYT. THAKUR RAMNANDAN SINHA**
36. **SYT. SARANODHAR SINHA**
37. **SYT. MATHURA PRASAD**
38. **SYT. DR. SYED MAHMUD**
39. **SYT. KRISHNABALLABH SAHAY**
40. **PT. OPRISH TEWARI**
41. **SYT. BRAJNANDAN SAHAI**
42. **SYT. RAMCHARITRA SINGH**
43. **SYT. RAMNARAYAN SINGH**
44. **PROF. ABDUL BARI**
45. **PANDIT KARTANAND SHARMA**
46. **SYT. KISHORI PRASANA SINGHA**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President—SRI RAJENDRA PRASAD*  
*General Secretary & Treasurer—SRI ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINGHA*

## *5. Bombay*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

47. **SYT. K. F. NARIMAN**
48. **S. T. BHULABHAI J. DESAI**
49. **SYT. K. M. MUNSI**
50. **SYT. S. K. PATIL**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President—SYT. K. F. NARIMAN*  
*General Secretaries—1. SYT. S. K. PATIL*

2. **SYT. GANPATISHANKER N. DESAI**

## *6. Burma*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

51. **SYT. GANGA SINGH**

### *Office Bearers—*

*President—SYT. GANGA SINGH*  
*Secretary—SYT. RAMESHNATH*  
*Treasurer—SYT. MOHANLAL KALIDAS*

## *7. Delhi*

### *A. I. C. C. Members—*

52. **SHRIMATI PARVATI DEVI**
53. **SRI B. NARAYANAM**
54. **PT. ALGURAI SHASTRI**
55. **SRI B. KESHAV GUPTA**

**Office Bearers—****President**—SYT. LAXMI NARAIN**General Secretary**—SYT. B. NARSIMHAN**8. Gujarat****A. I. C. C. Members—**

56. SYT. MORARJI R. DESAI

57. SYT. KANAIYALAL NANCUNHAI

58. SYT. GOPALDAS AMBADAS DESAI

59. SYT. AMBATALAL DALPATBHAI

SETH

60. SYT. ARJUNLAL

61. SHRIMATI BHAKTALAXMI

GOPALDAS DESAI

**Office Bearers—****President**—SHRI VALLABHIBHAI PATEL**Secretaries**—1. SYT. BHOGILAL D.

LALA.

2. SYT. MORARJI R. DESAI

**9. Karnatak****A. I. C. C. Members—**

62. SYT. S. K. HOSMANI

63. SYT. G. B. DESHPANDE

64. SHRIMATI KANALADEVI CHATTO-

PADIYA

65. SYT. R. R. DIWAKAR

66. DR. N. S. HADDIKAR

**Office Bearers—****President**—SYT. S. K. HOSMANI**Secretaries**—1. SYT. R. R. DIWAKAR

2. SYT. S. B. BETGERI

**10. Kerala****A. I. C. C. Members—**

67. SYT. K. RAMAN MENON

68. DR. A. I. MENON

69. SYT. P. KRISHNA PILLAI

70. SYT. C. K. GOVINDAN NAIR

**Office Bearers—****General Secretary & Treasurer—**

SHRI K. KANAN MENON

**11. Mahakoshal****A. I. C. C. Members—**

71. PANDIT RAVISHANKER SHUKLA

72. SETH GOVIND DAS

73. PANDIT D. P. MISRA

74. CAPTAIN LAL AWADHESI

PRATAP SINGH

75. SGT. MAKHANLAL CHATURVEDI

76. THAKUR CHHEDILALJI

**Office Bearers—****President**—PANDIT RAVISHANKER

SHUKLA.

**Secretaries**—1. THAKUR PYARELAL

SINGH

**2. Pt. D. P. MISRA****12. Maharashtra****A. I. C. C. Members—**

77. SYT. SHANKAR DATTATRAYA

DEO

78. SYT. VASUDEO VITHAL DASTANE

79. NYT. NARHAN VISHNU GADGIL

80. SYT. ACHYUT SITARAM PATWAR-

DIHAN

81. SYT. GOVIND RAO DESHPANDE

82. DR. B. C. LAGU

**Office Bearers—****President**—SYT. SHANKAR DATTA-

TRAYA DEO

**Secretary**—SYT. N. V. GADGIL**Treasurer**—DR. B. C. LAGU**13. Nagpur****A. I. C. C. Members—**

83. DR. N. B. KHARE

84. SYT. E. S. PATWARDHAN

85. SYT. SHIVARAJJI CHUDIVALE

86. SYT. BIKULALJI CHANDAK

**Office Bearers—****President**—DR. N. B. KHARE**Secretary**—SYT. E. S. PATWARDHAN**Treasurer**—SYT. CHATURBUJ B. JARANI**14. N. W. F. Pr****A. I. C. C. Members—**

87. DR. KHAN SAHEB

88. SYT. RANJAN KHAN

**15. Punjab****A. I. C. C. Members—**

89. DR. SATYAPAL

90. SYT. S. HAMDUL SINGH CAVERHAR

91. SYT. L. DUNICHAND

92. SYT. MANJER NANDLAL

**Office Bearers—****President**—DR. SATYAPAL**General Secretary**—LALA ACHINT

KAM

**16. Sindh****A. I. C. C. Members—**

93. SYT. JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

94. CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI

95. HWAMI GOVINDANAND

96. SYT. K. K. SIDIHWA

**Office Bearers—****President**—DR. CHOITHRAM P. GID-

WANI

**Secretary**—SWAMI KRISHNANAND**Treasurer**—SETH LAICHAND PANA-

CHAND

## 17. Tamil Nadu

*A. I. C. C. Members—*

97. SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
98. SYT. N. M. R. SUBBARAMAN
99. " M. BHAKTAVATSALAM
100. " V. M. USABDULLA
101. " S. SATYAMURTI
102. " T. S. AVINASHILINGAM
- CHETTIAR
103. " C. N. MATHURANGA MUDALIAR
104. " P. S. KUMARASWAMI RAJA
105. " A. VEDARATHNAM PILLAI
106. " C. A. IYAH MUTHU
107. " SHRIMATI RUKMINI LAKSHMI-PATHI
108. SYT. P. N. CHOKALINGAM CHETTIAR

*Office Bearers—*

- President*—SYT. S. SATYAMURTI  
*Secretaries*—1. SYT. M. BHAKTAVATSALAM  
 2. " K. KAMARAJ

## 18. United Provinces

*A. I. C. C. Members—*

109. PANDIT GOVIND BALLABH PANT
110. SYT. PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
111. " RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI
112. SHRI J. B. KRIPALANI
113. SYT. SAMPUERNANAND
114. SHRI NARENDRA DEO
115. PANDIT VISHAMBHAR DAYAL TRIPATHI
116. SYT. B. MOHANLAL SAXENA
117. BAL KRISHNA SHARMA
118. " GOPINATH SRIVASTAVA
119. " DAMODAR SWAROOP SETH
120. " CHANDRABHAN GUPTA
121. " GOPAL NARAYAN SAKHENA

*Office Bearers—*

- President*—SYT. RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI  
*Secretaries*—1. SYT. MOHANLAL SAXENA  
 2. PT. BALKRISHNA SHARMA  
 3. SYT. SAMPUERNANAND  
 4. PT. KESAV DEO

MALAVIYA

*Treasurer*—SARDAR NARMADA PRASAD SINGH

## 19. Utkal

*A. I. C. C. Members—*

122. PT. NILKANTH DAS

*Office Bearers—*

- President*—PANDIT NILKANTH DAS  
*Secretary*—SHRI BHAGIRATHI MAHA PATRA  
*Treasurer*—DR. ATAL BIHARI ACHARYA

## 20. Vidarbha

*A. I. C. C. Members—*

123. SYT. BRIJLAL BIYANI
124. SHRIMATI DURGABAI JOSHI
125. DR. S. I. KASHIKAR
126. SYT. D. L. KANADE SHASTRI

*Office Bearers—*

- President*—SHRI BRIJLAL BIYANI  
*Secretary*—SHRIMATI DURGABAI JOSHI

## 21. North West Frontier Province

*A. I. C. C. Members—*

127. KHAN ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN

## 22. Bengal

128. SYT. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE
129. " JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA
130. " SURESH CHANDRA MAJUMDAR
131. M. ASHRAFUDDIN AHMED CHOWDHURY
132. SYT. DHIRESH CHANDRA CHAKRAVERTY
133. " KIRAN SANKAR ROY
134. DR. PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
135. SYT. KAMINI KUMAR DUTTA
136. " PURUSHOTTAM ROY
137. " BASANTA KUMAR DAS
138. DR. NALINAKSHYA SANYAL
139. SYT. GOPIKA BILASH SEN

## 23.

140. SHRI B. K. DADACHANJI
141. DR. GANESH DAS
142. SHRI RAMESH NATH GOWTAM
143. SHRI JANMALAL BAJAJ (*Ex-officio*)

# The Indian National Congress

## Proceedings of the Working Committee

Wardha—29th. June to 1st. July 1936

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Wardha on June 29, at 3 p. m. It continued its sittings on June 30 and July 1, 1936. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided. The following members were present :

Shris (1) Rajendra Prasad, (2) Vallabhbhai Patel, (3) C. Rajagopalachari, (4) Jinnah Bhai, (5) Jai Ramdas Doularam, (6) Bhulabhai J. Desai (?), Shankarrao Deo, (8) Jaiprakash Narayan, (9) Achyut Patwardhan, (10) J. B. Kripalani.

The following resolutions were passed :

### LATE DR. ANSARI

1. This Committee records its sense of irreparable loss to the national cause by the sudden and premature death of Dr. M. A. Ansari, a dear and valued comrade, and tenders to the bereaved family its sincere sympathy and condolence.

### LATE SHRI ABHAS TYABJI

2. This Committee records its heartfelt sorrow over the passing away of Shri Abbas Tyabji, the Grand Old Man of Gujrat, whose services and brave sacrifices endeared him to the Nation, and tenders its sincere condolence to Mrs. Tyabji and other members of the family.

### ARABS IN PALESTINE

3. The Working Committee sends its greetings and its full sympathy to the Arabs of Palestine in their struggle for independence against British Imperialism.

### VACANCIES IN THE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

4. Under Art. XII (e), the Working Committee rules that any person ceasing to be a member of his Provincial Congress Committee, shall also cease to function thereafter as a delegate provided all such vacancies under which the same might have occurred shall be forthwith reported to the Working Committee.

### BYE-ELECTION OF DELEGATES

5. In a constituency where for any reason a bye-election of a delegate becomes necessary, the members entitled to vote and be candidates for such a vacancy shall be

- (a) those included in the list mentioned in Art. VI (a) and
- (b) new members enrolled since the closing of the said list and three months prior to the bye-election.

### BENGAL ELECTIONS

6. In connection with the new election consequent upon Shri Rajendra Prasad's awards in the Bengal dispute, the request of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for the extension of election dates and having a whole district as one plural member constituency and vote by majority was granted. Further Shri Rajendra Prasad was authorised to deal finally with any disputes arising from these elections.

### CONGRESS AND THE NATIONAL PARTY

7. The President placed before the Committee the correspondence which passed between him and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The general Congress attitude in regard to the Communal Award has already been stated by the President in his statements to the press, dated June 2 and June 27. In order to prevent any further misapprehension on the subject, the Committee expect to clarify the Congress position in this matter in the election manifesto which will be framed by the A. I. C. C. and issued in due course. The Committee welcomed the desire for co-operation with the Congress expressed by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and some of his colleagues

and expressed the hope that it will be possible to find ways and means to ensure such co-operation in the national struggle against Imperialism.

#### TILAK SWARAJ FUND

8. The question of meeting the unfounded charges made against the Tilak Swaraj Fund was discussed. The President's announcement that he would issue a statement to the effect that the account books at the Treasurer's office at Bombay will be open to inspection for the public on a reasonable notice being given to that office was welcomed. The Committee's opinion was that henceforth any malicious or defamatory statement should be challenged in a court of law.

#### PROVINCIAL QUOTA

9. In view of the fact that only four provinces had paid the provincial contribution, it was decided that the period for the payment of the provincial quotas be extended upto August 10.

#### PROVINCIAL CONSTITUTIONS

10. The constitution of the Karnatak and U. P. Provincial Congress Committees were placed before the Committee. The Committee authorised the President and the General Secretary to look into the Provincial Constitutions and sanction them if there was nothing inconsistent with the Central constitution.

#### OTHER MATTERS

11. The letter of the President of the Mahakosala Provincial Congress Committee regarding the disciplinary measures against a member of their committee for congratulating Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao upon his appointment to the Governorship of the province was considered.

The Committee was of opinion that the Mahakosala Provincial Congress Committee could take whatever disciplinary action it thought fit in the matter. The question of framing a resolution covering such cases was left over for the next meeting.

12. The letter of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee about the membership of the Reception Committee of the ensuing session of the Congress was considered.

The Working Committee's opinion was that the Provincial Congress Committee was free to enrol non-Congressmen as members of the Reception Committee and make such other rules in this behalf as it considers fit.

13. The Lucknow Congress Reception Committee's letter asking for extension of time for the submission of accounts was considered and a month's extension was granted.

14. The question of Shri Jaiprakash Narayan's membership of the Working Committee was considered. The Committee's opinion was that the case was covered by the rule regulating bye-election of delegates made earlier and that there was consequently no constitutional bar in the way of Shri Jaiprakash Narain being elected to the A. I. C. C.

15. The report of the sub-committee of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee regarding "The History of the Congress" was placed before the Committee. Shri Rajendra Prasad was requested to deal with it.

16. The A. I. C. C. Inspector's reports about the working of the various Provincial Congress Committees were placed before the Committee.

17. On the recommendation of Shri Jairamdas Daulatram, the time for replying to the questionnaire issued by the Mass Contact Committee was extended to the end of August.

18. It was decided that the next meetings of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee be held in Bombay about the middle of August. The President was to finally decide the exact dates.

### Congress Parliamentary Committee

A meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Committee was held at Wardha on July 1 and 2, 1936. The following business was transacted :—

1. Shri Vallabhbhai Patel was elected Chairman of the meeting.
2. Communications received from members who were unavoidably absent were placed before the meeting.
3. The following office-bearers were elected unanimously on the motion of Shri Bhulabhai Desai seconded by Shri Rajagopalachari :

Shri Vallabhbhai Patel—*President*.

Shri Rajendra Prasad and Pt. Govindballabh Pant—*Secretaries*.

As to treasurer it was resolved that the choice need not be restricted to the members of the Committee and the President be authorised to appoint one in his discretion whenever he considered it necessary.

4. The following were appointed to prepare the draft of the rules for conducting the business of the Committee.

Shris Vallabhbhai Patel ; Rajendra Prasad ; Rajagopalachari ; Bhulabhai Desai ; Ravishankar Shukla and Govindballabh Pant.

5. After considering the draft of the Sub-Committee the following rules were adopted :—

1. The Executive Committee which will consist of eleven members shall conduct the affairs of the committee and may decide all matters except questions relating to policy and final selection of candidates.

2. The President will have the power to dispose of all urgent matters. He may, whenever he considers it proper, dispense with a meeting and dispose of any question after obtaining the opinions of members by circulation.

3. The President of any Provincial Congress Committee, if unable to attend any meeting, may depute any other member of that Committee to act for him at such meeting but such person shall not have any right to vote.

4. The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be seven.

5. Every person offering himself for election as a Congress candidate must sign a pledge in the form given below.

6. No one who is a member of the Indian National Congress shall stand as a candidate for any legislature unless adopted by this Committee.

7. Final selection of candidates will be made by this Committee.

8. All correspondence by the office-bearers, the members of the Committee and the candidates and all communications addressed to members and office-bearers by any person on matters concerning elections, shall be treated as confidential, and shall in no case be published unless authorised by the Secretaries.

9. The recommendations, proposals or decisions of the Provincial Committees in regard to the selection of candidates should not be published until finally approved by the Congress Parliamentary Committee, except with the express permission of the President.

6. The following were elected members of the Executive Committee :—

(1) Shris Vallabhbhai Patel (*Chairman*), (2) Rajendra Prasad, (3) Govindballabh Pant, *Secretary*, (4) Rajagopalachari, (5) Bhulabhai J. Desai, (6) T. Prakasam, (7) Narendra Das, (8) Satyapal (9) N. B. Khare (10) S. Satyamurti and (11) One representative from Bengal.

7. The Committee considered the question of setting up a suitable machinery for Provincial work and passed the following resolution :—

"In Unitary Legislative Provinces the Provincial Congress Committee should form Parliamentary Committees for the purpose of organising election to Legislatures in their respective Provinces. In composite Legislative Provinces the Congress Provinces comprised therein should form a joint Parliamentary Committee for the aforesaid purpose composed as follows :—

*Madras Presidency*—Tamilnadu 5, Andhra 5, Kerala 1, Karnatak 1.

*Bombay Presidency*—Bombay city 3, Maharashtra 5, Gujrat 3, Karnatak 3.

*Central Provinces*—Mohakoshal 10, Nagpur 5, Berar 5.

The Assam and the U. P. Parliamentary Committees shall include one nominee each from Sylhet District and Delhi Congress Province respectively.

The members of the Congress Parliamentary Committees shall be *ex-officio* members of the Parliamentary Committee in their respective provinces.

8. With reference to the forthcoming elections the Committee was of the opinion

- (1) That seats in the Upper House should be contested on behalf of the Congress as vigorously as those in the lower.

(2) So far as practicable, the Congress should set up candidates not only for the General Constituency, but also for scheduled castes. Mahomedan, Sikh, and other special constituencies.

9. As regards the selection of candidates on behalf of the Congress the Committee resolved that

(a) Before making their final recommendation to the Central Parliamentary Committee, the Provincial Parliamentary Committees should publish a definite date for the selection of candidates and should obtain signature on the prescribed pledge from every prospective candidate before such date.

(b) Every such pledge must be accompanied with a contribution of Rs. 50 towards the Provincial election fund except in the case of candidates for scheduled castes and backward tribes and areas constituencies in whose favour this rule may be relaxed in really deserving cases.

(c) No one who is a member of the Indian National Congress will stand as a candidate for any legislature until and unless he has been adopted by this Committee.

(d) It will be open to the Provinces to make recommendations for the Upper House at any time without waiting for the selection of their candidates for the Lower House. In case of pressing necessity the Provinces may make recommendations regarding individual candidates.

(e) In case of emergency the President will have power to deal with such recommendations on behalf of the committee.

10. The candidature of the following was approved for the forthcoming election for the Council of State :

*Bombay*—Raja Bahadur Govindlal Bansilal.

*Madras*—Shri Vellingeri Gounder, 2. Shri V. Ramdas and 3. Seth Girdhardas Naraiadas.

*Berar*—Shri Brijlal Bihani.

The President was authorised to deal with such recommendations that may be received from the Provinces hereafter on behalf of the Committee.

11. The Committee considered the letter of the President of the N. W. F. Parliamentary Board dated April 21 and resolved that the N. W. F. Parliamentary Board be recognised for the purposes of election in the N. W. F. P.

#### FORM OF PLEDGE

Province.....

Constituency.....

(a) I am a member of the Indian National Congress at.....

(b) I offer myself for election for the Assembly (Council) for the constituency of...

(c) If I am not accepted as a Congress candidate I hereby undertake not to stand independently or on any other party ticket against a candidate put forward by the Congress.

(d) On my being accepted as a Congress candidate for the said or any other constituency, I hereby undertake to conduct the election campaign, in accordance with the instruction issued by the Congress Committee.

(e) I further declare that I will follow the principles and policy laid down by the Congress or by any competent authority on its behalf and will conform to the rules and directions duly issued from time to time, as well as to the instructions issued by the party organisation in the Assembly (Council) for the guidance of the members thereof.

(f) I also undertake to resign my seat whenever I am called upon to do so by a competent Congress authority.

#### Labour Committee

A meeting of the Congress Labour Committee was held at Wardha on July 2, 1936. The following business was transacted :

1. Shri J. B. Kripalani was appointed the Secretary of the Committee.

2. Resolved that the Secretary be directed to collect information regarding Labour Unions and Organisations, their rules and constitutions, membership, working and affiliations.



3. Resolved that the Secretary should immediately report to the Committee any matters including industrial disputes, where the help of co-operation of the Committee is sought by any labour union or workers. The Secretary is further authorized in urgent cases to take such steps as may be desirable and feasible in anticipation of the Committee's approval, provided that where the labour union or the workers concerned are acting on principles and policies which are in conflict with the principles and policies of the Congress, the Secretary shall report to the Committee or convene a meeting.

4. The letter of the General Secretary of the A. I. T. U. C. expressing a desire of the representatives of that organisation to meet the members of the Congress Labour Committee was placed before the Committee.

It was resolved that the next meeting of the Committee be held near about the time of the Working Committee and at that time the representatives of the various labour organisations including the representatives of the A. I. T. U. C., N. F. T. U., All India Railwaymen's Federation, Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, All India Postal and R. M. S. Union, and All India Press Workers' Federation may be invited for conferring with the Committee.

### The President's Tour—Bombay

President Jawaharlal Nehru paid a visit to Bombay in mid-May. He was there for a week. During this brief period he addressed scores of monster gatherings of all classes and kinds of Bombay's mixed population of a million and a half. He attended the sessions of the Trade Union Congress and addressed meetings of workers. Open air meetings in the Azad Maidan and in Chowpatty attracted scores of thousands. There were also large gatherings of merchants, of students, of Muslims and special meetings organised by socialists. A manifesto issued by some leading merchants criticising the President's address at Lucknow led to many demonstrations organised by the merchants of Bombay to show their sympathy and solidarity with the Congress. More than twenty addresses of welcome were presented to the President by merchant associations, some being accompanied with purses. The President's brief stay in Bombay created a great stir in the city and showed the great hold of the Congress, with its message of Indian independence, on the vast and varied population of the great city. No such upheaval of popular enthusiasm had taken place there for many years.

The President also visited Poona and Akola and addressed vast gatherings there in addition to meeting Congress workers and others at informal meetings.

### Delhi and the Punjab

The President's tour in Delhi and the Punjab commenced on May 28. The last two days' programme had to be abandoned owing to the President's throat trouble and the general condition of his health. This caused great disappointment to thousands of peasants who had either collected at or were on their way to the meetings.

The Punjab tour commenced on the day when a demonstration for the Shahid-ganj Mosque had been organized by the Muslims consequent on the judgment in the civil suit. Though the communal atmosphere was tense the meetings addressed by the President were attended not only by the Hindus but by the Muslims in their thousands. During the tour the President constantly reminded the people of the Punjab to remember the two big issues of national Independence and the abject poverty and unemployment of the masses and not to be sidetracked to trivial issues and minor matters. In the words of Dr. Satyapal the President's tour "has put new life in the nationally minded people of the Punjab." Wherever he went, whether it were the cities of Delhi, Amritsar or the modest townships of Taran, Gujranwala, Sarhali and others, scores of thousands came to hear from him the Congress message. In the village of Sarhali in Amritsar from miles around a hundred thousand strong mass of peasants, artisans and traders had tracked on foot and on camels to make one feel that something was happening.

During the tour in various cities meetings took place of people interested in the formation of an Indian Civil Liberties Union and tentative committees were formed to consider the subject further.

### The Tilak Swaraj Fund

The following press statement was issued on *July 8th, 1936* by the President about the Tilak Swaraj Fund which had been the object of attack from various interested quarters for the past many months :—

The approach of elections has apparently galvanised some of the opponents of the Congress in western and southern India into feverish activity of a peculiar kind. The desire to find something against the Congress had led them away from the straight and honourable paths of political controversy into shady and crooked ways. Our finances are attacked, our accounts challenged, the Tilak Swaraj Fund becomes suspect, and long-nosed detectives seem to prow! about trying to find out what happened fifteen years ago or thereabouts. There is something ludicrous about this sudden interest in old accounts, long passed and audited and put away in our archives; and this new interest becomes still more curious when we find that it is exhibited by gentleman some of whom confess to not having contributed at all to any Congress fund. The donors are content, but the eager public spirit of those who did not give anything cannot be suppressed. I do not know if we are expected to produce, for the benefit of these eager spirits, all our accumulated account-books for the last fifteen years, or to get them printed afresh.

As I have previously stated, all our central accounts have been carefully audited from year to year and circulated to the press for public information. These accounts contained also audited statements of provincial accounts, which were inspected periodically by our auditors and inspectors. Annually up to 1925 a big volume containing these full accounts was issued to the public and the press. By the end of 1925 the original collections for the Tilak Swaraj Fund were practically exhausted, except for the large sums ear-marked for specific purposes and some trust funds. Our accounts therefore from 1926 onwards became much simpler and more modest and thus it was not necessary to issue annually the big book of accounts which had been prepared till then. From then onwards briefer statements of accounts were prepared, audited, submitted to the All India Congress Committee for approval and issued to the press. May I, as one long connected with the A. I. C. C. office, express my gratitude to and admiration for our treasurer, Seth Jamnmal Bajaj, and his office for the efficient way in which they have kept the A. I. C. C. accounts and looked after Congress funds during these many years, many of which were difficult years of storm and stress?

Seth Jamnmal Bajaj informs me that he and his office will be happy to give any information about Congress accounts to any donor who addresses himself to them. They will also welcome personal visits of donors to their office at 395 Kalbadevi Road Bombay, where all the old and new accounts of the Congress office can be inspected and enquiries made. Donors interested in knowing how the ear-marked items of the Tilak Swaraj Fund—about fifty lakhs were so ear-marked—were distributed, and what part of them is still represented by investments, stocks, and immovable property, can easily find this out from the Treasurer's office or by a personal reference to the accounts and papers. But every such visit of inspection should take place after reasonable notice and during office hours.

The Treasurer's office as well as our office will always be happy to reply to all *bona fide* enquiries and to place the information at their disposal before all Congressmen and donors. But it is clear that there is no such *bona fide* intent behind the attacks and insinuations made by some people who are neither Congressmen nor donors to the Congress funds. It is not the practice of the Congress to rush to a court of law even though there may be sufficient justification for this. But if malicious and defamatory statements continue to be made they will have to be challenged in a law court.

### Indian Civil Liberties Union

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru issued on *April 22, 1936* a letter to several prominent public men of all shades of opinion throughout India, inviting them to co-operate in the formation of a Civil Liberties Union for the protection of civil and individual liberties against arbitrary state action.

The response to this letter being encouraging enough Panditji framed a provisional constitution for a national Council for the whole of India and for Local Committees. This Constitution with an accompanying letter inviting some 180 prominent public men to join the Union was issued on July 8, 1936. In this letter Panditji stated that many desirable and worth-while people might have been left out from the list, but these could be added afterwards. He also suggested the name of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu as the President of the Union.

### All India Trade Union Congress

The 15th Session of the A. I. T. U. C. was held at Bombay on May 17, 18, 19, under the Presidentship of Shrimati Maniben Kara.

The Congress President had been invited and was present during a part of the proceedings and addressed the gathering.

Some of the problems before the Conference were, Unity with the All India Trade Union Federation, Fight for Freedom and Closer Contact with the Indian National Congress, Fight against the new Constitution, and other purely Trade Union problems.

Shri Sibnath Banerji, Shri Khedgikar and Shrimati Maniben Kara were appointed the President, Acting President and the General Secretary.

A Sub-Committee consisting of Shri Sibnath Banerji, Shrimati Maniben Kara, Shri Harihar Nath Shastri, Shri Meherally, Dr. Shetty and Shri R. M. Jambhekar was appointed to keep in touch with the Congress Labour Committee and to try to develop common action.

### Congress Diary

#### Obituary—SHRI ABHAS TYABJI

Death took place of Sri Abbas Tyabji, the Grand Old Man of Gujrat at Mussoorie on June 10, 1936.

#### All India Days—ABYSSINIA DAY

May 9 was observed as the Abyssinia Day throughout India. Resolutions were passed expressing sympathy with Abyssinia and condemning Italy. In many places resolutions were also passed condemning the League of Nations that had betrayed Abyssinia.

#### SUBHAS DAY

May 10 was observed as the Subhas Day when vigorous protests were made throughout the country and resolutions passed against the arbitrary detention of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose. He is now interned at Kurseong in his brother's bungalow there.

#### DR. ANSARI DAY

May 17 was announced as a day of universal mourning at the death of Dr. M. A. Ansari. Condolence resolutions were passed at meetings throughout the country.

#### Searches, Arrests and Convictions

##### Agra—

On May 8, the police searched the premises of Mr. Krishna Chandra, Secretary Congress Socialist Party and took away copies of the books "why socialism" and "Soviet Side-lights".

##### Saraiganj (Bengal)—

Order was served on a student of the local High School hitherto under restraint to leave the district immediately.

##### Lyallpur (Punjab)—

The Deputy Commissioner of Lyallpur suspended the resolution of the Municipal Committee to present an address of welcome to the President on his visit to that

place on the ground that the matter was not connected with the functions of the Committee. In spite of this order, six members presented an address to the Congress President on behalf of the Committee. It is rumoured that the Deputy Commissioner has recommended for the removal of the six members from the membership of the Committee.

#### *Lahore and Amritsar—*

Twenty house searches in Lahore and six in Amritsar were made on May 12, in quest of Communist literature. Nothing incriminating was found.

Mr. K. S. Man, Bar-at-Law, Secretary, All India Peasant Organisation and others were arrested.

#### *Jaranwala—*

Maulana Inayat Ullah, the Ahrar leader was arrested for an alleged seditious speech made at the Ahrar Conference.

#### *Calcutta—*

The Calcutta High Court upheld the conviction against Editor and Printer of a Hindi weekly "Shramik Mitra" for three months' rigorous imprisonment and Rs. 100 fine respectively on the charge of publishing a seditious article in the paper entitled "Criminal Law Amendment Bill."

#### *Patna—*

The Joint Secretary of the Bihar Congress Socialist Party was served with an order under Section 144 to leave Jamalpur and not the area for a period of two months.

#### *Calcutta—*

In connection with the riot in the Hooghly Jute Mill at Garden Reach the police charged 66 persons, with being members of an unlawful assembly, rioting, trespass and causing hurt to the manager of the mill and others.

#### *Lucknow—*

Notices were served on office-bearers of the Lucknow Textile Workers' Union not to come within half a mile radius of the R. G. Cotton Mills where a strike was going on. Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code has also been promulgated prohibiting an assembly of more than five persons near the mill. Securities for good behaviour have also been demanded of some of the office-bearers of the Union.

#### *Pondicherry—*

Mr. V. V. Giri, President-elect of the First French India Workers' Conference and Mr. Guruswami, Assistant Secretary of the A. I. R. F. were ordered by the French police to leave Pondicherry immediately upon their arrival. The Conference was also banned.

#### *Allahabad—*

Judgment was delivered by a special bench of the Allahabad High Court setting aside the local Government's order prohibiting the Hindi translation of Lenin's book "Imperialism." In the case of the translation of "A Manifesto of the Communist Party" the Court maintained the order of forfeiture.

#### *Bombay—*

A postal envelope with a printed picture of Gandhiji was not delivered to the addressee and was redirected to the sender with the remark "Proscribed."

#### *Calcutta—*

An order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code was promulgated in a suburb of Calcutta banning all open air meetings, processions and demonstrations. Notice was served on a party of Labour leaders and workers who attempted to hold a mass meeting of labourers.

#### *Tanpail (Bengal)—*

The Sub-Divisional Officer drew proceedings against 62 Mohammedans of Gopalpur police station under Section 107 Criminal Procedure Code as they were likely to cause serious breach of the peace by forming an association called "Praja Samiti" (Peasants' Committee).

#### *Trichinopoly—*

The District Board upon being called upon by the Government to show cause why one of its resolutions should not be cancelled as it was in excess of the powers conferred upon the board replied that it saw "no reason to cancel the resolution passed at its April Meeting protesting against the arrest of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose."

**Barrack (Bengal)—**

Three detainees, under the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Act, who were prohibited from leaving their houses after sunset were arrested on a charge of violating the order.

**Darjeeling—**

Mr. Satish Chandra Das who was reported to have gone in search of a job in the Timber Department was arrested for travelling without passport.

**Kapurthala State—**

The Chief Minister has served notices to Sardar Lakha Singh and Sardar Arub Singh, Acting President and Secretary respectively of the Peasants' League, restricting their movements to their villages for three months and also warning them that if they continue to be a "nuisance" to the State their property will be confiscated and further steps would be taken against them.

**Lyallpur (Punjab)—**

Chinta Singh, an alleged Communist was sentenced to one month's rigorous imprisonment under Criminal Law Amendment Act on a charge of absconding from his village where he was interned. He admitted having done so, but said that he did it as he was starving in the village and left it to find work.

**Calcutta—**

The police searched the shop of "Messrs Books of the World." After an hour's search they are reported to have taken away copies of following books: (1) The Wide Sea Canal by Maxim Gorky, (2) The Challenge of the East by Sherwood Eddy, (3) U. S. S. R. handbook edited by Lovissepar (?), (4) France to-day and Peoples' Front by Maurice Thorez.

**Bombay—**

Under the Press Emergency Powers the Governor-in-Council declared all copies of the Gujarati book entitled "Dariye Dav Lagyo" (Sea is on fire) by Mr. Bhat of Ahmedabad.

**Calcutta—**

The High Court of Calcutta reduced in appeal the sentence on the Editor "Dand-darpan" to three months' rigorous imprisonment and of the keeper of the press to Rs 100 fine. The Court remarked that one of the articles was seditious as it stirred up "old mud surrounding the Jallianwala Bag episode."

Sgt. Soumyendra Nath Tagore, the grand-nephew of the Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore arrested at Bombay and brought to Calcutta was charged with sedition and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment in connection with his speech on Subhas Day.

The sentence was subsequently reduced to 6 months by the High Court.

**Executive v. Judiciary—**

In the recent "Communist Trial" at Bombay the Chief Presidency Magistrate rejected the Crown Council's application for forfeiture of the sum of Rs. 4,435 which was found during the search of the accused persons. Immediately after the decision was given the Council for the Crown served an order on the Magistrate under Section 17 E of the Criminal Law Amendment Act prohibiting him from parting with the money as the Government had strong reason to believe that the money was meant for Communist propaganda!

**FIRST LAHORE CONSPIRACY PRISONER**

Shri Parmanand was arrested in connection with what has come to be known as the First Lahore Conspiracy Case under Section 121A, I. P. C., in 1914-15 and his trial took place under the special war-time legislation. Originally sentenced to death his sentence was subsequently reduced to a life term. All the long term prisoners were sent to the Andamans and after some years these were transferred to Indian Jail. Parmanand alone out of the First Conspiracy batch still remains in prison. He was only 23 years old when he was sentenced. He is believed to be in the Lahore Central Prison.

In answer to a recent question in the House of Commons it was stated on behalf of the Government that it was not proposed to discharge Shri Parmanand, as he had not reformed sufficiently.

**KHAN ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN**

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was released from the Almorah Jail on August 1, 1936 on the expiry of his term of imprisonment. Order banning his entry into the Frontier Province and the Punjab were served on him at the Jail Gate.

## Proceedings of the All India Congress Committee

**Bombay—22nd. & 23rd. August 1936**

A meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held at Bombay in the Congress House on *August 22 and 23, 1936*. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru presided. 81 members were present. Representatives came from all provinces except Uthal, Kerala and Burma.

The president reviewed at length the political situation.

The following two condolence resolutions were moved from the Chair and passed, all standing.

### 1. DR. M. A. ANSARI

This Committee records its sense of irreparable loss to the national cause by the sudden and premature death of Dr. M. A. Ansari, a dear and valued comrade, and tenders to the bereaved family its sincere sympathy and condolence.

### 2. SHRI ABHAS TYABJI

The Committee records its heartfelt sorrow over the passing away of Shri Abbas Tyabji, the Grand Old Man of Gujrat, whose services and brave sacrifices endeared him to the nation, and tenders it sincere condolence to Mr. Tyabji and other members of the family.

### N. W. F. P.

The following resolutions were also moved from the Chair and passed :

"The Committee expresses its indignation at the orders of the Government concerning prohibiting Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan from entering into or remaining in the N. W. F. P. and the Punjab and notes with regret the continuation of their policy of suppression of civil liberty of individuals engaged in national activities.

This Committee views with grave concern the reports of interference by officials in some provinces with the activities of the Congress in connection with the forthcoming elections.

In particular it condemns the action of the N. W. F. P. Government in arresting workers of the Palimentary Board and otherwise interfering with the meeting for election purposes.

### Election Manifesto

The Committee thereafter considered the manifesto submitted to it by the Working Committee. Shri Rajendra Prasad moved for its adoption and the motion was seconded by Shri Narendra Deo.

Several amendments were moved. Two of them were accepted by the mover and the rest were rejected by the House. The Manifesto, as given below, was then put to the vote and unanimously carried.

### TEXT OF THE MANIFESTO

For more than fifty years the Indian National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India, and ever, as its strength grew and it came to represent more and more the nationalist urge of the Indian people and their desire to put an end to exploitation by British Imperialism, it came into conflict with the ruling power. During recent years the Congress had led great movements for national freedom and has sought to develop sanctions whereby such freedom can be achieved by peaceful mass action and the disciplined sacrifice and suffering of the Indian people. To the lead of the Congress the Indian people have responded in abundant measure and thus confirmed their inherent right to freedom. That struggle for freedom still continues and must continue till India is free and independent.

These years have seen the development of an economic crisis in India and the world which has led to a progressive deterioration in the condition of all classes of our people. The poverty stricken masses are to-day in the grip of an even more abject poverty and destitution, and this growing disease urgently and insistently demands a radical remedy. Poverty and unemployment have long been the lot of our peasantry and industrial workers ; to-day they cover and crush other classes also—the artisan, the trader, the small merchant, the middle class intelligentsia. For the vast millions of our countrymen the problem of achieving national independence can give us the power to solve our economic and social problems and end the exploitation of our masses.

The growth of the national movement and the economic crisis has resulted in the intense repression of the Indian people and the suppression of civil liberties, and the British Government has sought to strengthen the imperialist bonds that envelop India and to perpetuate the domination and exploitation of the Indian people by enacting the Government of India Act of 1935.

In the international sphere crisis follows crisis in an ever-deepening degree and world war hangs over the horizon. The Lucknow Congress called the attention of the nation to this grave situation in India and the world, and declared its opposition to the participation of India in an imperialist war and its firm resolve to continue the struggle for the independence of India.

The Congress rejected in its entirety the constitution imposed upon India by the New Act and declared that no constitution imposed by outside authority and no constitution which curtails the sovereignty of the people of India, and does not recognise their right to shape and control fully their political and economic future, can be accepted. Such a constitution, in its opinion, must be based on the independence of India as a nation and it can only be framed by a Constituent Assembly.

The Congress has always laid stress on the development of the strength of the people and the forging of sanctions to enforce the people's will. To this end it has carried on activities outside the legislatures. The Congress holds that real strength comes from thus organising and serving the masses.

Adhering to this policy and objective, but in view of the present situation and in order to prevent the operation of forces calculated to strengthen alien domination and exploitation, the Congress decided to contest seats in the coming elections for the provincial legislatures. But the purpose of sending congressmen to the legislatures under the new Act is not to cooperate in any way with the Act but to combat it and to end it. It is to carry out, in so far as is possible, the Congress policy of rejection of the Act and to resist British Imperialism in its attempts to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitation of the Indian people. In the opinion of the Congress, activity in the legislatures should be such as to help in the work outside in the strengthening of the people, and in the development of the sanctions which are essential to freedom.

The new legislatures, hedged and circumscribed by safeguards and special powers for the protection of British and other vested interests, cannot yield substantial benefits, and they are totally incapable of solving the vital problems of poverty and unemployment. But they may well be used by British imperialism for its own purposes to the disadvantage and injury of the Indian people. The Congress representatives will seek to resist this, and to take all possible steps to end the various regulations, Ordinances and Acts which oppress the Indian people and smother their will to freedom. They will work for the establishment of civil liberty, for the release of political prisoners and detenus, and to repair the wrongs done to the peasantry and to public institutions in the course of the national struggle.

The Congress realises that independence cannot be achieved through these legislatures, nor can the problems of poverty and unemployment be effectively tackled by them. Nevertheless the Congress places its general programme before the people of India so that they may know what it stands for and what it will try to achieve, whenever it has the power to do so.

At the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931 the general Congress objective was defined in the Fundamental Rights resolution. That general definition still holds. The last five years of developing crisis have however necessitated a further consideration of the problems of poverty and unemployment and other economic problems. With a view to this the Lucknow Congress laid particular stress on the fact that the most important and urgent problem of the country is the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry, fundamentally due to antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue systems, and intensified in recent years by the great slump in prices of agricultural produce," and called upon the Provincial Congress Committees to frame full agrarian programmes. The agrarian programme which will be drawn up by the A. I. C. O. on the basis of these provincial programmes will be issued later.

Pending the formulation of a fuller programme the Congress reiterates its declaration made at Karachi—that it stands for a reform of the system of tenure and revenue and rent and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and exempting uneconomic holding from payment of rent and revenue.

The question of indebtedness requires urgent consideration and the formulation of a scheme including the declaration of a moratorium, an enquiry into and scaling down of debts and the provision for cheap credit facilities by the State. This relief should extend to the agricultural tenant, peasant proprietors, small landholders, and petty traders.

In regard to industrial workers the policy of the Congress is to secure to them a decent standard of living, hours of work and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as the economic conditions in the country permit, with international standards, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment and the right of workers to form unions and to strive for the protection of their interests.

The Congress has already declared that it stands for the removal of all sex disabilities whether legal or social or in any sphere of public activity. It has expressed itself in favour of maternity benefits and the protection of women workers. The women of India have already taken a leading part in the freedom struggle, and the Congress looks forward to their sharing, in an equal measure with the men of India, the privileges and obligations of citizens of a free India.

The stress that the Congress has laid on the removal of untouchability and for the social and economic uplift of the Harijans and the backward classes is well-known. It holds that they should be equal citizens with others with equal rights in all civic matters.

The encouragement of khadi and village industries has also long been a principal plank of the Congress programme. In regard to the larger industries, protection should be given but the rights of the workers and the producers of raw materials should be safeguarded, and due regard should be paid to the interests of village industries.

The treatment of political prisoners has long been a scandal in India. Every effort should be made to improve this and make it humane. It is equally necessary to change the whole basis of the prison administration so that every prisoner might be treated in a humanitarian and rational manner.

The communal decision, which forms part of the new Act, has led to much controversy and the Congress attitude towards it has been misunderstood by some people. The rejection in its entirety of the new Act by the Congress inevitably involves the rejection of the communal decision. Even apart from the Act as a whole, the communal decision is wholly unacceptable as being inconsistent with independence and the principles of democracy; it encourages fissiparous and disruptive tendencies, hinders the normal growth and consideration of economic and social questions, is a barrier to national progress, and strikes at the root of Indian unity. No community or group in India profits by it in any real sense, for the larger injury caused by it to all outweighs the petty benefits that some have received. Ultimately it probably injures most those groups whom it is meant to favour. The only party that profits by it is the third party which rules and exploits us.

The attitude of the Congress is, therefore, not one of indifference or neutrality. It disapproves strongly of the communal decision and would like to end it. But the Congress has repeatedly laid stress on the fact that a satisfactory solution of the communal question can come only through the goodwill and cooperation of the principal communities concerned. An attempt by one group to get some communal favour from the British Government at the expense of another group results in an increase of communal tension and the exploitation of both groups by the Government. Such a policy is hardly in keeping with the dignity of Indian nationalism; it does not fit in with the struggle for independence. It does not pay either party in the long run; it sidetracks the main issue.

The Congress, therefore, holds that the right way to deal with the situation created by the communal decision is to intensify our struggle for independence and, at the same time, to seek a common basis for an agreed solution which helps to strengthen the unity of India. The effort of one community only to change the decision in the face of the opposition of another community might well result in confirming and consolidating that decision, for conflict between the two produces the very situation which gives Governments a chance of enforcing such a decision. The Congress thus is of opinion that such one-sided agitation can bear no useful result.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the whole communal problem, in spite of its importance, has nothing to do with the major problems of India—poverty and



wide-spread unemployment. It is not a religious problem and it affects only a handful of people at the top. The peasantry, the workers, the traders and merchants and the lower middle class of all communities are in no way touched by it and their burdens remain.

The question of accepting ministries or not in the new legislatures was postponed for decision by the Lucknow Congress. The A. I. C. C. is of opinion that it will be desirable for this decision to be taken after the elections. Whatever the decision on this question might be, it must be remembered that, in any event, the Congress stands for the rejection of the new Act, and for no co-operation in its working. The object remains the same: the ending of the Act. With a view to this end every endeavour will be made to prevent the introduction and functioning of the federal part of the scheme, which is intended to perpetuate the domination of imperialist interests and the feudal interests of the States over the whole country and prevent all progress towards freedom. It must be borne in mind that the new provincial assemblies will form the electorate for the proposed federal central legislature and the composition of those provincial legislatures will materially affect the fate of the federal constitution.

We appeal to the country to give every support to the Congress in the elections that are coming. National welfare demands it. The fight for independence calls for it. The effectiveness of the work that the Congress members of the legislatures will do, will depend on their numbers and their discipline and the backing and support that the country gives them. With a clear majority they will be in a position to fight the Act and to help effectively in the struggle for independence. Every party and group that stands aloof from the Congress organisation tends, knowingly or unknowingly, to become a source of weakness to the nation and a source of strength to the forces ranged against it. For the fight for independence a joint front is necessary. The Congress offers that joint national front which comprises all classes and communities, bound together by their desire to free India, and the exploitation of her people and build up a strong and prosperous and united nation, resting on the well-being of the masses.

With this great and inspiring goal before us, for which so many men and women of India have suffered and sacrificed their all under the banner of the Congress, and for which to-day thousands of our countrymen are suffering silently and with brave endurance, we call upon our people with full hope and confidence, to rally to the cause of the Congress, of India, of freedom.

## Second Day—Bombay—23rd. August 1936

### ENROLMENT OF CONGRESS MEMBERS

*Lala Dulchand* moved the following resolution :

"Resolved that every member of a primary Congress Committee will continue to be its member for a period of five years from the date of his first enrolment without being required to go into any other formalities except the payment of four annas each year."

The resolution was supported by *Shri Choitram Gidwani*.

*Shri S. K. Patil* moved an amendment to this resolution to the effect that "the proposition be forwarded to the Working Committee for consideration and recommendations thereon." The amendment was carried.

The *President*, in his opening speech on the first day, had told the committee that though the constitution gave him the right to nominate the members of his Working Committee and to fill up vacancies whenever they occur, he was averse to exercising that right for he believed that the best procedure would be for the A. I. C. C. to elect the Working Committee and to fill up vacancies therein. He therefore called upon the A. I. C. C. to fill up the two vacancies on the Working Committee caused by the resignation of *Shri Rajagopalachariar* and *Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan*.

*Shri Satyamurthi* raised a point of order. He pointed out that the election by the A. I. C. C. of the members of the Working Committee would be against the Constitution. The *President* however ruled that such a procedure would be against the Constitution.

Thereupon *Shri Satyamurthi* sought permission of the *President* to move the resolution that—"The *President* be requested to exercise his power under Section 12 of the Constitution." On the *President* giving the necessary permission *Shri Satyamurthi* moved the resolution. The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE

**Bombay—20th. to 23rd. August 1936**

A Meeting of the Working Committee of the A. I. C. C. was held on *August 20, 21, 22 and 23 1936* in Bombay at the residence of Shri Bhulabhai Desai. The following members were present.

Shris Jawaharlal Nehru (President), Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patil, C. Rajagopalachariar, Abul Kalam Azad, Jairamdas Daulatram, Bhulabhai Desai, S. D. Deo, Jamnadal Bajaj, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Narendra Dev, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan and J. B. Kripalani.

Before the commencement of the proceedings Shri Rajendra Prasad and the President on behalf of the Committee accorded a cordial welcome to their colleague Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

The Committee then considered the matters arising out of Sri Rajagopalachariar's resignation. The President announced that he had invited Dr. Rajan to be present during this discussion but Dr. Rajan had expressed his inability to come and had referred to various statements issued by him. These statements were considered and Shri Rajagopalachariar made a personal statement about the events leading up to the step that he had taken. The members of the Committee while appreciating the difficulties which he had to face and the necessity for bringing home to the country and to the Congress organisation in particular, the urgent need of maintaining discipline and loyalty within the Congress ranks, felt that from the larger view-point of Congress work his continuation in the Working Committee was desirable. He was therefore requested by all the members to reconsider his decision, in particular his resignation from the Working Committee. Shri Rajagopalachariar thanked his colleagues but regretted his inability, under the circumstances, to reconsider his decision. The Committee thereupon regretfully accepted his resignation.

The Committee further considered the events which led up to Shri Rajagopalachariar's resignation. It regretted that Dr. Rajan had been unable to accept the invitation to attend the Committee's meeting and to present his case. In his absence the Committee had to rely on the statement sent by him. Whether the various charges made by Dr. Rajan in this statement were well-founded or not, the Committee was clearly of opinion that his action in deliberately breaking his pledge and in inducing other Congress members of the Trichinopoly municipality to break their pledges was wholly indefensible and must be condemned. A Congress pledge, or any pledge, is given with a view to its observance and a deliberate breach of such pledges can only lead to the growth of indiscipline and a lowering of the standards of public life. Members of the Congress who may have grievances against any decisions or activities of Congress Committees have many ways open to them to bring their grievances to the notice of the Congress organisation so that inquiry might be made. All Congressmen are expected to give their willing adherence to Congress discipline, and so long as they function as members of any organisation elected on the basis of a Congress pledge that pledge holds and be scrupulously honoured. The Committee regrets therefore that Dr. Rajan, whatever the reasons that actuated him, did not adhere to the pledge that he had given.

The Committee is informed that the matter will soon be considered by the Tamil Nad Provincial Executive.

The President referred to Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan's resignation from the Working Committee. Syt. Jaya Prakash Narayan had felt that as he had not become a member of the All India Congress Committee for some months after the Lucknow Congress it was not desirable for him to continue as a member of the Working Committee and therefore he had not even stood for the All India Congress Committee at the last meeting of the Behar Provincial Congress Committee. The President pointed out that the technical difficulty in the way of Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan becoming a member of the A. I. C. C. had previously been removed and his colleagues would have very much liked him to continue as a member of the Working Committee. But in view of the earnest and repeated wish of Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan it was difficult to persuade him to reconsider his decision. His resignation was therefore accepted.

The matter of filling up the two vacancies created by the resignations of Shris Rajagopalachariar and Jayaprakash Narayan was then discussed. The President expressed his opinion that the vacancies be filled up by election by the A. I. C. C.

The Members of the Committee were however of opinion that the President should fill up these vacancies by nomination as the constitution provided.

The Committee passed resolutions to be placed before the A. I. C. C. for its adoption. The resolutions related to the political activity in the N. W. F. Province and the restrictions on Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan's entry into the Punjab and the N. W. F. Province. These resolutions are given in the proceedings of the A. I. C. C.

The Committee also adopted the Election Manifesto. This Manifesto was subsequently adopted, with some verbal changes by the A. I. C. C. and is given in its proceedings.

A reference having been made by the B. P. C. C. about the continued membership of Shri Ram Sunder Sinha to the A. I. C. C. from Midnapore who was nominated by the President Shri Rajendra Prasad to the A. I. C. C. at the time of the Lucknow Congress, the Committee held that Shri Ram Sunder's nomination ended with the Lucknow session of the Congress. His seat therefore must be considered as vacant and may be filled up by the B. P. C. C. He was however allowed to participate in the A. I. C. C. meetings at Bombay as a Member.

The reference made by the B. P. C. C. about the position of Mrs. Nellie Sen-Gupta as a President of the 48th Session of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta was considered. The Committee held that the elected President of that session as well as the previous one held in Delhi was Shri Madan Mohan Malaviya and as such he alone can enjoy the constitutional privileges accorded to the ex-presidents of the Congress.

#### TEXTILE EXEMPTION COMMITTEE 1931

Shri Banker's letter in this behalf was read. The Committee decided that if the General Secretary was satisfied that the amount claimed by Sjt. Shankerlal Banker was not paid at the time, it may be paid now.

#### AGRARIAN REPORTS

The Committee extended the time for the submission of the Agrarian Reports to September, 1936.

#### LAST DATE OF ENROLMENT

The Committee also extended the last date for enrolment of primary members to September 30. The date of receipt by the P. C. C.s of lists of qualified Congress members from Primary Committees was extended to October 10 and that of despatch by the Primary Committees of above lists to October 5.

The time for submitting the report of the last Congress Session at Lucknow was extended by two months.

Shri V. K. Krishna Menon was deputed to represent the Indian National Congress at the World Peace Conference at Brussels from September 3 to 6, 1936. His expenses were to be met with from Congress funds.

#### JAPAN

The President was requested to write to Mr. A. M. Sahai to ask his Committee to drop the name of the "Indian National Congress Committee of Japan" and to give to that organisation some other name as the new Constitution did not contemplate the formation of Congress Committees outside India. The work done by Mr. Sahai and his Committee was to be appreciated and continued cooperation from here offered.

The following papers were placed before the Committee :

- (1) Resolutions passed by the Labour Committee.
- (2) Resolutions passed by the Swaraj Bhawan Management Committee and the Swaraj Bhawan Trust Committee.
- (3) Foreign Department Secretary's Report.
- (4) The Political and Economic Information Department Secretary's Report.

#### SWARAJ BHAWAN

The question of filling up the vacancy caused by the death of Dr. M. A. Ansari on the Board of Trustees of the Swaraj Bhawan was postponed to the next meeting.

With regard to the proposed museum to be located in the Swaraj Bhawan the Committee wanted a scheme prepared by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to be placed before it when ready.

The Committee accepted the resolution of the Board of Management of the Swaraj Bhawan for the maintenance of the Swaraj Bhawan to the effect that the Committee

will continue to bear the costs of the maintenance of the Swaraj Bhawan and use part of it for its headquarters.

#### RAILWAY RETRENCHMENT

The Committee passed the following resolution about Railway Retrenchment recommended to it by the Labour Committee :

"The Working Committee has learnt with grave concern that orders have been passed to retrench about 4,000 lower-grade employees in the State-owned Railways, and to reduce the scales of pay of the lower grades of workers, retrospectively from 1931, whereas no such policy has been applied to all the higher grades.

"The Committee considers the demand of the Railway workers for a Court of Inquiry into the question of such retrenchment and reduction in pay, and for the suspension of retrenchment pending the result of enquiry as very fair, and regrets that the Railway authorities should have rejected such a proper demand."

### The Congress Parliamentary Committee

The Congress Parliamentary Committee met at Bombay on August 18, 19 and 23 1936.

1. The following resolution was passed :

"This Committee views with grave concern the reports of interference by officials in some Provinces with the activities of the Congress in connection with the forthcoming election.

In particular it condemns the action of the N. W. F. Provinces Government in arresting workers of the Provincial Parliamentary Board and otherwise interfering with the meetings for election propaganda."

2. The nomination of Sjt. Badri Dutt Pande as a candidate from Kumaun General and of Sjt. Sambhunath from Sitapur General Rural for the U. P. Council which had been sanctioned by the President on the recommendation of the President of the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee was ratified.

3. The draft manifesto was considered, amended and approved unanimously for submission to the Working Committee.

4. The resolution passed at the last meeting that candidates should be set up on behalf of the Congress for all constituencies including those for Muslim and Scheduled castes was reaffirmed.

5. One additional representative was sanctioned from Karnatak for the Madras Presidency composite committee.

It was decided that the Assam composite committee should consist of 8 representatives from Assam and 4 from Surma Valley.

7. It was resolved that the Secretary of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee be permitted to represent the Kerala P. C. C. in this Committee.

8. The candidature of Shri Gulab Singh for the Council from the Mainpuri constituency was approved.

9. Nominations of the C. P. and Berar Parliamentary Committee were approved viz.

(1) Svt. Narayan Rao Kelkar of Balaghat for the C. P. Constituency of the Council of State.

(2) Dr. W. S. Barlingay, M. A., Ph. D., Bar-at-Law, for the University constituency of the C. P. Provincial Legislative Assembly.

10. It was resolved that in case of constituencies comprising the whole or parts of more than Congress Province, the Composite Committee will make the selection and recommend the candidates to the Central Committee after considering the report of sub-committee consisting of the Presidents of the Provincial Congress Committees within the composite province. In other cases the Provincial organisations will deal with the constituencies within their respective jurisdiction and recommend the names to the composite committees which will make final nomination for the consideration of the Central Committee and in case of difference make a report fully stating the reasons. The composite committee should carry on propaganda for the entire composite-area and the Provincial Congress Committee in their respective provinces.

11. It was decided that cases of interference by officials in election campaign should be reported immediately to the Central Committee with full details.

12. It was resolved that Provincial Congress Committees should at once translate the manifesto and distribute it freely in a handy form.

## The Congress Labour Committee

A meeting of the Congress Labour Committee was held at the Congress House, Bombay on August 18 and 19, 1936.

The Committee conferred with the representatives of the following organisations :

(1) All India Trade Union Congress, (2) National Trade Union Federation, (3) All India Railwaymen's Federation, (4) All India Press Workers Federation and (5) Ahmedabad Textile Association. The question discussed was, how best the Congress could help labour organisations in their difficulties and could be useful to them generally. The following resolutions were passed :

(1) Whereas the growth and development of trade unions in the country on healthy lines is urgently needed in the best interest of both labour and industry, the Committee presses upon the employers in the country the necessity of giving facilities to the workers for building up labour organisations, giving recognition to *bona fide* unions for the purpose of negotiation, and refraining from victimising workers who participate in the work of organisation or in legitimate union activities.

(2) Whereas the Committee is of opinion that industries receiving protection from the State should be under a legal obligation to give adequate wages to their workers and generally accord fair treatment to them, the Congress parties in the legislatures are recommended to secure suitable legislation to achieve this end.

(3) Whereas it has been brought to the notice of this Committee that in many Indian States the legislation regarding factories, payment of wages, compensation for accidents and maternity benefit, as well as the administration of laws relating to labour does not come up even to the level obtaining in British India, the Committee urges the authorities of the States to take immediate steps to raise the conditions in these respects at least to the standard prevailing in British India.

(4) The Congress Labour Committee is of opinion that Congress Committees should take more active interest in questions affecting the welfare of industrial labour and give all such help as they can to the unions working on principles and policies of the Congress and where no labour unions exist the Committees should through a suitable agency help the workers to organise on the above lines.

(5) The Labour Committee recommended for the adoption of the Working Committee a resolution in connection with the All India Railwaymen's Federation's demand for a Court of enquiry into the question of retrenchment in the State-owned Railways and reduction in the scale of the salaries of lower paid grades of services therein.

(For resolution see Proceedings of the Working Committee page 192).

## Vacancies in the Working Committee

The President issued the following statement to the Press on September 4, 1936.

Two vacancies having arisen in the Working Committee owing to the resignation of Shri C. Rajagopalachari and Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan, I hereby appoint, under article XII of the Constitution, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu and Shri Govind Ballabh Pant to fill these vacancies.

In view of the fact that Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, a member of the Working Committee, is incapacitated from taking part in the work of that Committee by reason of his enforced detention by the British Authority in India, it is necessary to appoint a substitute to act for him till such time as he is free to resume his place on the Committee. I appoint Shri Sarat Chandra Bose to act as such substitute member of the Working Committee.

## President's Tour

The President toured in Sindh from 18 to 26 July. He also paid a second visit to the Punjab and was there from July 27 to August 3. During the course of his visit to the two provinces he addressed about 250 meetings. Everywhere in the cities, villages or on the wayside, the meetings were usually crowded. The President delivered the message of Congress and drew the attention of the people to the most pressing problems of the country namely poverty, hunger and unemployment. Before

these, every other problem paled into insignificance. These problems could not be solved without the attainment of political independence.

As usual wherever he went he received a number of addresses from Municipalities, Local Boards and other public bodies and associations.

## Press Statements of the President

### Political Prisoners' Day

Seven years ago, on September 13, died *Jatin Das* in a Lahore prison on the sixty-first day of his hunger-strike. This brave and gentle and lovable boy gave his life voluntarily in protest against the treatment given to political prisoners. India was moved and stirred by this self-immolation and the memory of its moves us strangely still, and questions arise in our minds, disturbing, accusing questions. What have we done for the cause for which *Jatin Das* gave his life? Have we done all we could for the betterment of the lot of the political prisoners, those soldiers of freedom whose life is one of continuous suffering and sacrifice?

In recent months *Jogesh Chatterjee* underwent a long ordeal by hunger-strike for this purpose. He was induced at last to give this up on the assurance that every effort will be made to organise public opinion on this subject. *Babu Rajendra Prasad*, the president of the All India Political Prisoners' Committee issued a comprehensive statement re-stating the demands of political prisoners for humane treatment. We have many preoccupations and urgent problems face us, but we may not forget the lot of our comrades in prison in India, in detention camps, in the Andamans, and we must ceaselessly press for their better treatment, in particular for more human contacts by more frequent interviews and letters, and mental food through books, newspapers and writing materials. We must insist on the ending of solitary confinement, which is such a torture to the sensitive and cultured, and on the removal of political prisoners from the Andamans.

This and much else we must bear in mind and work for, and it is fitting that on the anniversary of *Jatin Das*'s death we should think of him and all those who are suffering silently behind prison bars. I commend to all Congress Committees and Congressmen to observe Sunday September 13 as Political Prisoners' Day and to hold public meetings where resolutions based on *Rajendra Babu*'s statement should be passed.

### Brussels Peace Conference

On the 6th of September the World Peace Congress meets at Brussels. Among the many efforts that have been made to consolidate the forces of peace, this Congress is the most remarkable and it represents, more than any other, a consolidation of all the forces in the world today that stand for peace and progress. The most diverse elements and groups ranging from some members of the Conservative Party in England, Liberals, Labourites, supporters of the Popular Front in France, enthusiasts for the League of Nations idea, Pacifists, Socialists, Communists, heads of progressive governments in Europe, and innumerable organisations all over the world, have joined their forces to combat the growing menace of Fascism and world war. Our own National Congress is taking full part in this world Congress and will be represented by *Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon*.

It is strange that this Congress should meet just when the world seems to be on the verge of the precipice and terrible war on an unimaginable scale threatens the entire world; when in Spain a bloody and horrible civil war is devastating the country; when every country is preparing feverishly for the clash that seems inevitable. Yet that is the very reason why this World Peace Congress has become inevitable and has drawn to its ranks such diverse groups which are prepared to sink their many differences in face of the common danger.

In Spain to-day we have some indication of the horror that might overtake the world on a much larger scale. There a peacefully elected democratic government representing the progressive elements was suddenly attacked by the rebel groups with the aid of a mercenary army from abroad. And these rebels have received comfort and material aid from fascist countries, and there has been no lack of sympathy for them even in Britain. Those who talk so loudly of law and order in India do not hesitate to support the rebels against the Government in Spain. That Government was not even Socialistic; it was a liberal democratic regime. But

because it was progressive it was disliked by the reactionaries everywhere, and in Spain to-day we see the determined attack of fascist forces against a rising democracy. That is a lesson for us all, and that in miniature shows us the state of the world to-day.

All minor problems sink into insignificance before this vital question of progress versus reaction all over the world. It is well that we should throw our weight on the side of progress and peace and line up with the forces that stand for this. But that peace can come only when the root causes of war are removed. As the Lucknow Congress declared its conviction "that such a peace can only be established on an enduring basis when the cause of war are removed and the domination and exploitation of nation by nation is ended." Peace cannot come out of fascism for both are founded on war.

I trust that the Indian People will give heed to this problem of world peace, with which we are so intimately connected, and send their greetings to the brave effort that is being made in Brussels to combat the menace of war. (September 2, 1936.)

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OF GREETINGS

While we desire peace and try to check the forces making for war, we feel that real peace can only come when the causes of war are removed. The Peace Congress therefore must try to discover these causes of war and seek to remedy them. Otherwise all its efforts will be largely wasted. We need not touch upon those causes which make for war in the world and which are at present agitating Europe, for you are well acquainted with them. But I should like to emphasise that peace in colonial countries can only be established with the removal of imperialist domination. Peace cannot be made an excuse for the continuation of that domination, for imperialism is itself the negation of peace. Therefore for us in India, as well as for other countries situated like us, the first step must be political freedom to be followed, I hope, by social freedom. Thus we shall be able to build up in our country, in common with the rest of the world, an enduring foundation for peace and freedom and human progress.

In India to-day we suffer from all the ills of imperialist domination and exploitation, and our energies therefore are directed towards the removal of these evils. The new Act which the British Parliament has passed with reference to the Indian constitution strengthens this imperialist domination instead of weakening it. Therefore we have to combat it and we should like our comrades of other countries to realise this present position in India and the difficulties we have to face. In the economic sphere the distress of the peasantry as well as of the workers and of large numbers of middle class unemployed is acute. Thus the economic situation has reached a stage when a mere political solution without the solution of the economic problem will bring little relief to the people. Still the political solution must inevitably precede all other steps. And that political solution can only be the independence of India. The Indian National Congress stands for this independence because it believes that only thus can it solve the social problem that confronts the country.

But while our National Congress works for Indian independence, it does not believe in an isolated and aggressive nationalism. It looks forward to a world order based on equity and co-operation between nations. We trust that the World Peace Congress will work to this so that the root causes of war might be removed and an era of peace and progress dawn on this distracted world.

### Civil Liberties Union

#### SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S ANNOUNCEMENT

I have received a large number of replies to my letter on the formation of the Civil Liberties Union. The proposed provisional constitution has been almost unanimously approved. Two or three suggestions have been made in regard to it which will no doubt receive consideration. Almost every one, who has so far answered, has agreed to join the National Council. As other answers are awaited, however, the announcement of names of the Council will be made later.

There has also been unanimous agreement to the proposal that Srimati Sarojini Naidu should be the head of the organisation. Mrs. Naidu kindly agreed to undertake

this responsibility. She and I, in common with many others, felt, however, that it was in the fitness of things that such an organisation should have the patronage and leadership of Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore. We approached him therefore and requested him to agree to become the Honorary President of the Union. I am happy to say that the Poet has agreed to this proposal though he has rightly pointed out that he cannot be burdened with work or special responsibility. I am sure that all persons interested in the Union will cordially welcome this news. We shall thus have as our Honorary President of the Union Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, and Srimati Sarojini Naidu as the Chairman and head of the National Council.

### Late Lokamanya Tilak

August 1, Lokamanya Tilak's anniversary was observed all over the country. The President paid a tribute to the memory of the great patriot and said that he had for the first time sounded the war cry "Swaraj is my birth right."

### Political Repression--Punjab

Master Mota Singh is reported to have been interned in his village for his activities in connection with the Doaba Political Conference which was not yet held.

Mr. Aziz, a socialist was charged with sedition at Rawalpindi.

Mr. Harjat Singh, Chairman, Reception Committee, Doaba Political Conference, is reported to have been interned in his village.

Orders were served on Harnamsingh and Ram Singh connected with recent Conferences not to leave their village or participate in political activity for one year.

Shri Bhujja Singh interned in his village was sentenced to six months' if I. under the Criminal Law Amendment Act for having addressed a meeting in violation of the terms of his restraint order.

Lala Baldeo Mitter Balji, President of the Hoshiarpur D. C. C. was arrested on a warrant under Section 124A.

Shri Kartar Singh was served with a notice directing him not to leave his village without permission.

Maulana Pir Fazlul Hussain was arrested under Section 124 for an alleged seditious speech.

Sardar Raja Singh who was a state prisoner in Lahore Fort has been interned in his own village.

Maulana Inayat Ullah was sentenced to one year and half R.I. under Section 124A.

In search of Communist literature the Lahore police carried out several searches in the city. Several bookstalls and private houses were searched. Some books were taken away.

The Punjab Government served on the 4th September Shri M. R. Masani, General Secretary, All India Congress Socialist Party, with a notice to quit the Punjab within 24 hours and not to return to the province for one year. Shri Masani broke the order. He was however taken to Delhi under police escort and released there.

The Executive Committee of the Punjab P. C. C. lodged a strong protest in July last against the Punjab Government's policy towards the Congress Socialists. The Committee viewed with concern the arrest of Congress Socialists and the gaging orders served upon them, even when they were engaged in election propaganda.

A circular is reported to have been issued by the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government to the Chief District Officials suggesting a free use of Section 124A (Sedition) Sections 151, 107 and 108 (class hatred and securities for good behaviour). It is estimated that the number of Socialists and Congress workers in the Punjab who have been recently served with orders not to leave their villages would be more than fifty.

### Bengal

The Bengal Government has extended the provisions of Chapter II and III of the Bengal Public Security Act 1932 to the town of Calcutta and the Districts of Howrah and 24 Parganas, giving certain new powers to the Commissioner of Police of Calcutta and the District Magistrates of the above districts.

The justification given by the Government is not the usual justification of terrorist activity. The Government have discovered in Bengal a new special menace, that of revolutionary and communistic propaganda—nay not even that but the display of symbols of revolution and the slogans used in west. This action will hit no com-



munistic organisations for such are already under ban. The only effect would be to penalise labour, youth league and socialistic organisations.

In Dacca orders were passed on several young men for alleged revolutionary connections. The orders were to remain in force for one year. Some of these orders were for home internment, some were on school boys who were to remain in their respective houses, others prohibited them from leaving their houses except for attending schools.

A shop-owners' sentence of two years for possessing a book "The Future of Indian Politics" by M. N. Roy was reduced to nine months on appeal.

The Calcutta Police searched some 20 houses, college hostels and boarding houses in August last. Some six young men were reported to have been arrested.

An order was issued on August 4, that no person between the ages of 12 and 30 shall "sit or loiter between sunset and sun rise" in 19 places at Dacca and 16 places at Narayanganj including parks, play-grounds and temples for one year. Disobedience to the order would be punishable with six months' imprisonment and fine. Such order has been issued for the third time since the Bengal Suppression of Terrorists Act has come into force.

It was reported that Mr. Chakravarty of "Ananda Bazar Patrika" was arrested on suspicion and detained in custody for about a week in connection with a conspiracy case.

A student at Barisal was fined Rs. 30 on a charge of violating the term of his internment order.

Shri Sibnath Bannerji, President of the All India Trade Union Congress was sentenced to one year's R. I. on August 20.

Shrimati Chandu Bibi was arrested for 'delivering a seditious speech on a warrant from Bengal. She was tried and sentenced to a fine of Rs. 100 in default 4 months' imprisonment.

After protracted negotiations the Bengal Government informed the Calcutta University that the interruption in school work caused by encampment of troops in school buildings in District towns would henceforth be avoided as far as possible. The Government had at first contended that no such interruption was caused.

### Delhi

Shri Satyavati Devi was served with a notice calling on her to abstain from all anti-Government activity and to confine herself within the Municipal limits for six months.

Ratan Prakash was served with an externment order to leave Delhi within 24 hours and not to return there for a period of one year.

Mr. Jai Ram Sharma of Meerut was arrested for a speech made by him at a peasants' conference. He was sentenced to two years' R. I. under Section 124A, I. P. C.

The police, last month, raided the office of the Delhi Congress Committee when a meeting of the Working Committee was being held. The search was in connection with unauthorised leaflets. The police seized a cyclostyle machine.

### Bombay

The Collector of Ratnagiri refused sanction of the expenditure of Rs. 10 incurred by the District Board in connection with the welcome function to Shri Rajendra Prasad during his tour in Maharashtra. The amount is reported to have been collected from the members of the Board.

Shri K. N. Padke, a Poona Pleader, who was under instructions from the Government not to participate in political activities, has been refused permission by the Government to stand as a candidate in the forthcoming elections.

The Poona police raided the house of a member of the Socialist Youth League on August 4 in search of objectionable literature.

Mr. Hari Prasad Desai, a labour worker from Gujarat was arrested under Section 17 of the Cr. Law Amendment Act.

The number of persons externed from the city of Bombay under Section 27 of the City of Bombay Police Act 1920, during the years 1933-34, 1934-35 and 1935-36 was 346, 578 and 663 respectively.

During this period 67 deportation orders were issued under Section 3 of the Foreigners Act III of 1864. Of this number 10 orders have yet to be served on persons concerned on the expiry of sentences which they are serving.

### Sindh

Professor S. P. Vaswani of the D. G. National College, Hyderabad has been asked

to resign his professorship within three days as he was supposed to be taking active part in Congress politics and had lodged Mr. M. R. Masani in his house.

#### N. W. F. P.

The Governor directed that Sections 5, 16 and 17 of the Public Tranquillity Additional Powers Act will remain in force in Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and Hazara Districts till December 23, 1936. The act had already been enforced in Peshawar District.

Mirza Ghulam Rabani and Khan Mohd. Jamin Khan were arrested under section 124A, I. P. C. for alleged seditious speeches. Several prominent members of the Frontier Congress Parliamentary Board were also arrested.

#### U. P.

Shri Kedar Nath, Secretary, Town Congress Committee, Fyzabad was served with a notice under Section 108 to furnish two securities of the sum of Rs. 5000 each and a personal bond of Rs. 5000 for one year.

Thakur Malkhan Singh of Aligarh was sentenced to two years' R. I. for the offence of harbouring a notorious bandit Radha Charan. He has filed an appeal.

#### Madras

Mr. Iyengar of the Labour Protection League was sentenced to imprisonment of 6 months' R. I. for a speech delivered by him on Independence Day, January 26.

Shri Nityanand Vatsyayana, a prisoner sentenced to ten years, now in Bellary Jail was convicted for going on hunger strike as a protest against his being locked up in the solitary cell. He was prosecuted for this and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

#### Assam

Mr. Abdul Haleem, a Labour Leader who had undergone an imprisonment of 18 months was arrested after his release under Detention Law.

#### Nagpur

Mr. Krantikumar, a Congress worker, was sentenced to 2 years' R. I. under Section 124A I. P. C. for "preaching sedition" through his discourses on Ramayan. His appeal was dismissed by the High Court.

### Press Repression

The District Magistrate of Poona demanded a security of Rs. 1000 for the publication of a Marathi Daily "Lokashakti". Securities of Rs. 2000 were demanded from an Amritsar Daily "Punjab Kirti" for publishing extracts from the speech of the President of a political conference. The "Hans" a purely literary monthly, devoted to building up a common platform of various Indian languages has been required to submit a security of Rs. 1000. Demands of securities of Rs. 1000 and 2000 were made from Patna Weekly "Azad" and Agra weekly "Sainik" respectively. The sums have been deposited. "The Mazdoor", a labour weekly of Calcutta has to cease publication consequent upon a demand of security.

#### Jodhpur

Mr. Purshottam Gaw, President Civil Liberties Union, Jodhpur, has contradicted the statement made by the Jodhpur Government that it had not imposed a ban on the Civil Liberties Union of Jodhpur.

#### Mysore

It is understood that the District Magistrate has issued an order banning the hoisting and exhibition of the Congress flag in the city or the vicinity thereof for a period of six months.

#### Baroda

The Secretary of the Praja Mandal states that a secret circular has been issued by the Government to "all the revenue and police officials to prevent members or workers of the Praja Mandal from going to villages and making enquiries about the social and economic condition of the people or from collecting statistics, because with this excuse the Praja Mandal was likely to misrepresent things to the people which may tend in future to create troublesome situation."

**Sirohi and Marwar**

Sirohi State is understood to have prohibited the entry and sale of "Rajasthan", a Hindi weekly of Beawar. Marwar State also is reported to have banned the above periodical.

**Rajnandgoan C. P.**

The State has banned the entry of the Nagpur English Weekly "Independent" and "Karmavir" a Hindu Weekly of Khandwa.

**The Faizpur Session of the Congress**

The following is the text of resolutions passed at the 50th. Session of the Congress, held at Faizpur (Maharashtra) on the 27th. and 28th. December 1936:—

**1. Condolence**

This Congress expresses its sense of sorrow and loss at the deaths of Dr. M. A. Ansari, Shri Abbas Tyabji, Dr. M. K. Sambasivam, Shri V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Shri Krishna Kumar Mitra, Dr. B. Subramanian, Pandit Pyarey Mohan Dattatreya and Shri Waman Rao Naik.

**2. World Peace Congress**

The Congress, having considered the report of Shri V. K. Krishna Menon on the World Peace Congress, records its appreciation of the part he took in this Congress as its representative. It supports whole-heartedly the objective of the Peace Congress to ensure world peace by removing the causes of war, and offers its full co-operation to it in this urgent and vital task. The National Congress will willingly associate itself with the organization which the Peace Congress has established in this behalf. The Congress, however, wishes to emphasise that imperialism itself is a continuing cause of war and its elimination is essential in the interests of world peace. The President is authorised and directed to take necessary steps in this behalf.

**3. Burma**

The Congress directs the All-India Congress Committee to consider what, if any, changes in the Congress constitution are necessitated by the political separation of Burma from India. The fate of the two countries has been linked together for ages past by strong cultural bonds, and for many years they have struggled together for freedom against British Imperialism. The political separation that is being enforced now against the wishes of a large body of Burmese opinion and in the interests of British Imperialism, cannot weaken the old bonds and must not be permitted to come in the way of our joint struggle. Any decision about the place of Burma in the Congress constitution must be arrived at after consultation with the people of Burma, and for this purpose the Working Committee should arrange for a representative to visit Burma.

In the event of any changes in the constitution in regard to Burma being considered desirable, the All-India Congress Committee is authorised to incorporate them in the constitution and to give effect to them.

**4. Spain**

The Congress has followed with the deepest sympathy and anxiety the struggle that is going on in Spain between the people of Spain and military group aided by foreign mercenary troops and Fascist Powers in Europe. The Congress realises that this struggle between democratic progress and fascist reaction is of great consequence to the future of the world and will affect the future of imperialism and India. The Congress has noted without surprise that in this struggle the policy of non-intervention followed by the British Government has been such as to hamper in many ways the Spanish Government and people in fighting the fascist rebels, and has thus in effect aided these rebels who are being openly backed and helped by the fascist Powers.

The Congress, on behalf of the people of India, sends greetings to the Spanish people and the assurance of their solidarity with them in this great struggle for liberty.

### 5. Excluded Areas

This Congress is of opinion that the creation of Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas and Chief Commissioners' Provinces, including British Beluchistan, from the 1st January 1937 and covering the area of 207,900 square miles and inhabited by 13 million people is yet another attempt to divide the people of India into different groups with unjustifiable and discriminatory treatment and to obstruct the growth of uniform democratic institutions in the country.

This Congress is further of opinion that the separation of these Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas is intended to leave a larger control of disposition and exploitation of the mineral and forest wealth in those areas and keep the inhabitants of those areas apart from the rest of India for their easier exploitation and suppression.

The Congress holds that the same level of democratic and self-governing institutions should be applicable to all parts of India without any distinction.

### 6. Natural Calamities

The Congress has noted with deep sorrow that an unprecedented number of natural calamities has ravaged our country during the past year and flood and drought and famine and cyclone have brought intense suffering to vast numbers of our people, whom poverty and unemployment have already reduced to such dire straits. The Congress expresses its deep sympathy with the victims of those calamities and its appreciation of the fortitude displayed by the people in facing them.

It congratulates those individuals and non-official agencies who, by their loving service and assistance, have helped to alleviate distress.

The Congress feels that no sufficient effort has been made so far by the Government to institute scientific inquiries into the causes of the floods, which are becoming more frequent and wide-spread, and that it should certainly be possible to control such floods to a large extent, or prevent waters from accumulating, by measures taken in that behalf, especially by an examination of the effect of building numerous embankments without a sufficient number of culverts to allow free passage of water.

The Congress is of opinion that the wide-spread misery caused by the various calamities should be relieved by state action on an adequate scale, in particular, by a total remission of rent and revenue and water and other rates of the current year in the worst affected area; and a substantial reduction in the partly affected area; and by a moratorium of arrears of rent, revenue and agriculturists' debts. Interest-free loans and other help, free or at reduced rates, should also be given to enable those who have been rendered destitute, to start life afresh.

### 7. War Danger

The Congress has drawn repeated attention in the past to the danger of imperialist war and has declared that India can be no party to it. Since the last session of the Congress the crisis has deepened and fascist aggression has increased, the fascist powers forming alliances and grouping themselves together for war with the intention of dominating Europe and the world and crushing political and social freedom. The Congress is fully conscious of the necessity of facing this world menace in co-operation with the progressive nations and peoples of the world, and especially with those peoples who are dominated over and exploited by imperialism and fascism. In the event of such a world war taking place there is grave danger of Indian manpower and resources being utilised for the purposes of British imperialism, and it is therefore necessary for the Congress to warn the country again against this and prepare it to resist such exploitation of India and her people. No credits must be voted for such a war and voluntary subscriptions and war loans must not be supported and all other war preparations resisted.

### 8. Frontier Policy

In the opinion of the Congress the policy pursued by the Government of India on the North-West Frontier has been a total failure and has caused great injury both to the interests of India and the trans-border tribes. The policy has been pursued in the interests of imperialism and mostly with the object of justifying the heavy military expenditure in India and of providing training under semi-war conditions

for otherwise idle troops maintained for imperial purposes. Any policy that necessitates inhuman and barbarous methods, like bombing from the air, and which leads to frequent military raids across the Frontier is to be condemned. In addition to this the policy has often resulted in making friendly trans-border tribes unfriendly and hostile.

Both the foreign and domestic interests of India require peace on the Frontier and friendship with our neighbours. And the Congress believes that these friendly relations and peace can be established without much difficulty if the trans-border tribes are treated as friends and good neighbours and are not interfered with on the pretext of spreading civilization, or by making military roads under the guise of rendering economic assistance, or otherwise. If such a policy is pursued they will become a valuable source of strength and lessen the burden of military expenditure of India. The Congress believes that the charge laid against the Frontier Pathan tribes as being untamed, fierce, truculent and aggressive is without foundation and appears to be made with the object of justifying unwarranted interference and a heavy permanent military expenditure.

The Congress declares that the people of India desire the friendship of all their neighbours and are willing to co-operate with them in the great tasks which promote peace and human well-being.

The Congress condemns the last punitive measures in the trans-frontier area which seem to be yet another instance of the futile and dangerous experiments of the Government of India on the North-West Frontier which lead only to suffering and leave a trail of ill-will behind them.

In the opinion of the Congress the right way to deal with the Frontier situation is for an inquiry to be made into the economic, political and military situation with a view to settle finally and peacefully the problem of the Frontier in co-operation with the border tribes.

### 9. Detenus

The Congress records its emphatic condemnation of the unjust and inhuman policy of the British Government in India in keeping thousands of Indians in detention for indefinite periods without charge or trial and holds that this policy has been resorted to with the object of paralysing the national movement of freedom. The Congress voices the demand of the Indian people that the persons now in detention without charge or trial be released forthwith and the various orders of restraint withdrawn. The Congress sends its warm greetings and sympathy to the detenus who have been suffering in silence and with brave endurance in the cause of India's freedom.

The Congress has learnt with alarm and concern that three detenus in Bengal have committed suicide within the last four weeks. The Congress considers that the fact that such acts of suicide have taken place is a significant indication that the conditions in which they are kept are intolerable and scandalous. The Congress demands a public enquiry into the causes which led to the said acts of suicide as well as into the conditions in which the detenus are being kept. The Congress sends its condolences to the bereaved families of the three detenus.

The Congress records its condemnation of the action of the Government in preventing any non-official and independent enquiry into the conditions in which the detenus are kept, like the one proposed by the Committee appointed by the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly.

The Congress condemns the revival of the prison in the Andamans which had been abandoned as a result of its condemnation by a committee appointed by the Government. In the opinion of the Congress the conditions prevailing therein, particularly those relating to interviews with prisoners, segregation and lack of facilities for intellectual entertainment of educated political offenders to the Andamans should be discontinued and those already transported should be brought back to India forthwith.

### 10. Indians Overseas

The Congress sends greetings to our fellow-countrymen overseas and its assurance of sympathy and help in their distressful condition and in the continuing deterioration in their status in the territories in which they have settled. The Congress is ready and willing to take all action within its power to ameliorate their condition, but desires to point out that a radical amelioration in their status must ultimately depend on the attainment by India of independence and the power effectively to protect her nationals abroad.

### 11. Colliery Disaster

The Congress notes with sorrow and alarm the frequent occurrence of accidents in the collieries of Bengal and Bihar, resulting in every case in the loss of numerous human lives, wide-spread misery among survivors and irreparable waste of a great deal of India's mineral wealth. In the opinion of the Congress such accidents are preventable and demonstrate the inefficiency of the State, and utter incompetence of the owners and managers of these collieries and their indifference to human suffering. It is necessary that effective measures be immediately undertaken by further legislation and the stricter and more vigilant enforcement of rules and regulations to prevent such accidents. The owners of collieries should be made liable to exemplary damages to be paid to sufferers from such accidents and their heirs.

### 12. B. N. Railway Strike

The Railway workers on the State-owned Railways, and their organisations supported by the public have been demanding a court of enquiry into the question of Railway retrenchment in general and the question of reduction of the pay of the lower grades of Railway service in particular. The Government and the Railway Board have persistently ignored this just and legitimate demand. This Congress is of opinion that even now if such a court of inquiry is substituted the present strike on the B. N. Ry. can be amicably settled.

The Congress congratulates the workers on the B. N. Ry. on their solidarity and the brave stand they have made against the repeated invasions on their rights. The Congress hopes that the public will extend to the strikers their full support and sympathy.

### 13. The Congress Constitution and Mass Contacts

The Congress wishes to stress again the desirability of increasing the association of the masses with the Congress organization and of giving opportunities to the primary members to initiate and consider Congress policies and programme. With a view to bring this about, a Committee consisting of the President, Shri Rajendra Prosad, Shri Jairamdas Doulatram, Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, and the General Secretary is appointed, with the General Secretary as convener, to consider the introduction of suitable changes in the constitution, and to report to the A. I. C. C. by the 30th April 1937. This Committee will consider, inter alia, the report of the Mass Contacts Committee of the Lucknow Congress.

The Congress is of opinion that, even pending such reorganization, Provincial Congress Committees should organise their provinces on the following basis :—

1. Primary committees should, as far as possible, be established in villages and in mohallas or wards of towns.

2. Members of primary committees should meet together at least twice a year to review their own work, consider local problems and grievances and further to consider the policy and programme before the Congress, and send their report and recommendations to their higher committees. A specified number of members of primary committees should further have the right to requisition a meeting of the primary committee to consider a specific question.

3. The subscription of four annas per annum may be collected locally in kind.

In order to give effect to the above directions and further to make the Congress organisation more efficient and more responsive to the needs and desires of the masses, the Congress directs the Working Committee to appoint an organising secretary, and each Provincial Congress Committee also to appoint such organising secretaries. The Congress trusts that Congressmen in general will co-operate fully in this task of bringing our national organisation in close touch with the daily lives and struggle of the people.

### 14. Authority to All-India Congress Committee

The A. I. C. C. is authorised, if it so chooses, to make changes in the Congress constitution to enable the next session of the Congress to be held in a month other than December.

### 15. Suppression of Civil Liberties

The Congress again draws attention to and condemns the suppression of civil liberties in India, which continues intensively and prevents normal public life, interferes even with personal liberties, and crushes the present generation in India.

Hundreds of Congress Committees continue to be banned, as also labour and peasant unions, and other organisations; the Ordinance laws function in addition to the wide-spread and punitive use of the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to suppress public activities and even the expression of opinion; the press laws and censorship muzzle the newspapers; books and periodicals are banned or stopped under the Sea Customs Act; free movements are restricted by extortment and internment; concentration camps of detenus detained without trial continue; the Criminal Tribes Act is a menace to peaceful citizens, and further, this Act as well as the Foreigners Act are applied to political workers; passports are not issued to Indians for the purpose of going abroad, and many Indians in foreign countries are not allowed to return home and have to live in exile. In Bengal and the N. W. Frontier Province additional restrictions put an intolerable burden on public and private activities.

The Congress further deeply regrets to note that many of these, and in some cases, additional disabilities and suppression of civil liberties prevail in the Indian states.

The Congress stands for full personal, civil and democratic liberties in the whole of India including the States, and will continue to struggle for the establishment of such liberties. But the Congress realises that political freedom is essential for this purpose and the nation's energies must therefore be directed to the attainment of independence.

#### '6. Elections & Constituent Assembly

This Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act of 1935 and the constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people of the country. In the opinion of the Congress any co-operation with this constitution is a betrayal of India's struggle for freedom and a strengthening of the hold of British Imperialism and a further exploitation of the Indian masses who have already been reduced to direst poverty under imperialist domination. The Congress therefore repeats its resolve not to submit to this constitution or to co-operate with it, both inside and outside the legislatures, so as to end it. The Congress does not and will not recognise the right of any external power or authority to dictate the political and economic structure of India, and every such attempt will be met by organised and uncompromising opposition of the Indian people. The Indian people can only recognise a constitutional structure which has been framed by them and which is based on the independence of India as a nation and which allows them full scope for development according to their hopes and desires.

The Congress stands for a genuine democratic State in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the Government is under their effective control. Such a State can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage, and having the power to determine finally the Constitution of the country. To this end the Congress works in the country and organises the masses, and this objective must ever be kept in view by the representatives of the Congress in the legislatures.

The Congress endorses the Election Manifesto of the A. I. C. C. and calls upon candidates, standing on its behalf, to carry on their election campaign strictly on its basis and after election, to conduct their work in the legislatures in accordance with it. Congress members of the legislatures should take the earliest opportunity to forward in the new Assemblies the demand for a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage, and this demand should be supported by a mass agitation outside to enforce the right of the Indian people to self-determination.

The question of acceptance or non-acceptance of office by Congress members elected to the legislatures under the new constitution will be decided by the A. I. C. C. as soon after the provincial assembly elections as is practicable. Immediately after the elections the various Provincial Congress Committees will take steps to consult their district and other local Committees and send their own recommendations on this subject, so that the A. I. C. C. may be assisted in deciding this issue by the opinion of the mass of Congressmen and the country.

#### 17. Convention

This Congress resolves that after the elections to the Provincial Legislatures a Convention shall be held consisting of Congress members of the various provincial and central legislatures, the members of the All India Congress Committee, and such other persons as the Working Committee might decide upon. This convention shall put the

demand for the Constituent Assembly in the forefront, shall determine all feasible methods for ending the constitution in the provinces and for opposing the introduction of the Federal Structure of the new Act, and will consider what other steps should be taken in the legislatures to give effect to the policy laid down in the Congress Election Manifesto, Congress resolutions, and the decisions of the All-India Congress Committee.

The Working Committee shall take all necessary steps for the calling of this convention and shall lay down the procedure governing it.

### 18. Appeal to Voters

The Congress invites the attention of the nation to the general election that will take place soon in all the provinces, and in which over one thousand Congress principles and programmes in accordance with the policy laid down in the election manifesto. In this contest the Congress has to face the opposition of reactionary and imperialistic forces and groups entrenched in places of power and possessed of vast material resources. The Congress appeals to the millions of voters, men and women to vote for the candidates standing in its name and for the Independence of India, and trusts that they will stand for this great cause in the elections and in the greater struggle to follow.

### 19. Agrarian Programme

The Congress, at its last session, being fully conscious of the fact that the most important and urgent problem of the country is the appalling poverty, unemployment and indebtedness of the peasantry called upon the Provincial Congress Committees to make recommendations to enable the All-India Congress Committee to draw up an All-India Agrarian Programme. Many P. C. Cs have not yet submitted their recommendations for such a programme. The Congress regrets this delay that the subject is a vast and intricate one, requiring close study and investigation. It trusts that such P. C. Cs as have not reported so far will take early steps to send in their recommendations.

The Congress is convinced that the final solution of this problem involves the removal of British Imperialistic exploitation and a radical change in the antiquated and oppressive land tenure and revenue systems. It feels, however, that the deepening crisis has made the burden on the peasantry an intolerable one and immediate relief is urgently called for. Pending the framing of an All-India Agrarian Programme, therefore, the following steps are necessary.

1. Rent and revenue should be readjusted having regard to present conditions and there should be substantial reduction in both.
2. Uneconomic holdings should be exempted from rent or land tax.
3. Agricultural incomes should be assessed to income tax like all other incomes, on a progressive scale, subject to a prescribed minimum.
4. Canal and other irrigation rates should be substantially lowered.
5. All feudal dues and levies and forced labour should be abolished, and demands other than rent should be made illegal.
6. Fixity of tenure with heritable rights along with the rights to build houses and plant trees should be provided for all tenants.
7. An effort should be made to introduce co-operative farming.
8. The crushing burden of rural debt should be removed. Special tribunals should be appointed to inquire into this and all debts, which are unconscionable or beyond the capacity of peasants to pay, should be liquidated. Meanwhile a moratorium should be declared and steps should be taken to provide cheap credit facilities.
9. Arrears of rent for previous years should generally be wiped out.
10. Common pasture lands should be provided, and the rights of the people in tanks, wells, ponds, forests and the like recognised, and no encroachment on these rights should be permitted.
11. Arrears of rents should be recoverable in the same manner as civil debts and not by ejectment.
12. There should be statutory provision for securing a living wage and suitable working conditions for agricultural labourers.
23. Peasant unions should be recognised.

### 20. Non-participation in the Coronation and other Imperialist Functions

The Congress, pledged as it is to the independence of India and the elimination of all imperialist control and exploitation of the Indian people, has for many years consistently followed a policy of not participating in any function or activity which is



meant to, or which tends to, strengthen the hold of British Imperialism or add to its prestige. This policy must be adhered to by all Congressmen. In particular the Congress wishes to declare that Congressmen cannot participate in any way in any celebration or functions that might be held in India in connection with the new King's coronation and trusts that the nation will abstain from participation in all such functions. The Congress, however, desires to make it clear that this is in no way intended to express any ill-will or discourtesy to the King's person.

#### 21. *Hartal on April 1, 1937*

In order to demonstrate effectively the will of the Indian people to resist the imposition of the unwanted Constitution and as an earnest of their determination to launch a powerful mass-movement for its destruction, the Congress issues a call for a nation-wide hartal or general strike on April 1, the day on which the new constitution is to be inaugurated.

#### 22. *Next Congress*

Resolved that the next Session of the Congress be held in Gujerat.

### **The All India Congress Committee**

#### *Faispur—25th. December, 1936*

A meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was held in the Subjects Committee Pandal at Tilak Nagar, Faispur on December 25, 1936 at 2 p.m. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided. The Committee consisted of new members elected for the ensuing year and the old members from Bombay.

The minutes of the last meeting held at Bombay on August 22 and 23, 1936

The President then made a statement about the accounts. Owing to the change in the time of the holding of the open session from March to December it had not been possible for the auditors to audit the account of the offices of the A. I. C. C. and the Treasurer in time. The audited accounts, the President said, would be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C.

The President then thanked the members and the country at large for the whole-hearted co-operation that he had received from them in his work and hoped that he would continue to receive the same co-operation during his new term of office next year.

The meeting then converted itself into the Subjects Committee Meeting of the Faispur session of the Congress.

#### *Faispur—December 26, 1936*

Another meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held at Faispur on December 26, 1936 at 1 p.m. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided.

Messrs Dalal & Shah and Messrs Chotalal & Agarwal of Bombay were appointed as honorary auditors of the Congress.

The President reminded the Committee that under the Constitution he was charged with the responsibility of nominating the Working Committee. He had previously given expression to his disagreement with this provision in the Constitution as it gave too much power to the President. He still felt that some change was necessary so that, at any rate, the All-India Congress Committee might have the earliest opportunity of considering the President's nominations. No such change had been suggested at this Session as a Constitution Committee had been appointed to consider the revision of the Constitution. The election of the whole Working Committee by the All-India Congress Committee did not appear to be a practical course as this might destroy its homogeneity and sense of corporate responsibility.

He then stated that he had decided to renominate the old Working Committee. He realised that many provinces were not represented on it and there were many other Congressmen and Congresswomen whom he would have liked to include but the number of members was limited to fifteen. He intended however to revive and extend the practice of inviting selected individuals to meetings of the working Committee.

## Members of the Working Committee

Shri Jawharlal Nehru (President), Jamnalal Bajaj (Treasurer), Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Jai Ramdas Daulatram, Subhas Chandra Bose (Acting : Sarat Chandra Bose), Bhulabhai J. Desai, Govind Ballabh Pant, Narendra Dev, S. D. Deo, Achyut Patwardhan and J. B. Kripalani (General Secretary).

## The Working Committee Proceedings

*Bombay, December 9th. to 11th. 1936*

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Bombay on 9, 10 and 11 December, 1936. Following members were present :

Shri Jawharlal Nehru (President), Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Jamnalal Bajaj, Bhulabhai J. Desai, Govind Ballabh Pant, Sarat Chandra Bose, Narendra Dev, S. D. Deo, Achyut Patwardhan and J. B. Kripalani.

### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held at Bombay already circulated were confirmed.

### 2. Mass Contacts

The report of the Mass Contacts Committee not being ready and not likely to be ready before the Congress session, the Working Committee appointed a sub-committee consisting of Shris Jawharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Jai Ramdas Daulatram, Jayaprakash Narayan and J. B. Kripalani to consider changes in the Congress constitution with a view to increase the initiative of primary members and to make the Congress a more effective organisation for carrying on its work and also to remove any anomalies that may be found in the constitution.

### 3. Swaraj Bhawan Trust

In place of the late Dr. M. A. Ansari, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was nominated a trustee on the Swaraj Bhawan Board of trustees in terms of the Trust Deed.

### 4. Burma

The Committee discussed the position of the Burma P. C. C. in view of the new situation created by the separation of Burma from India. It was felt that some member or members of the Working Committee should visit Burma and get personally acquainted with the wishes of the Burmese people in the matter and advise the Working Committee on the question.

### 5. Bengal

Shri Sarat Chandra Bose explained to the Committee the circumstances under which he had resigned from the membership of the Bengal Parliamentary Board. The opinion of the Committee was that he should withdraw his resignation in the interest of the Parliamentary work in his province. Shri S. C. Bose respected the wishes of his colleagues and withdrew his resignation. It was also decided that Shri Govind Ballabh Pant should visit Bengal and help the local Parliamentary Board to select finally candidates who were to stand on the Congress ticket from Bengal.

### 6. Peace Congress

Shri V. K. Krishna Menon's report about the World Peace Congress was placed before the Committee. The Committee approved of "the conditions and reservation to the four points of the Peace Congress" as stressed by Shri Krishna Menon in his report. The Committee also was of opinion that the question of Imperialism should also be emphasised in this connection.

### 7. Government Interference in Elections to the Provincial Assemblies

(1) In spite of unequivocal declarations and assurances by the Under-Secretary of State, the Viceroy and others as to the observance of strict neutrality by Government servants in the matter of elections to the Provincial legislatures, this Committee regrets to note the facts that several local Governments are still persisting in maintaining disqualifications of intending Congress candidates arising out of convictions

for political offences, and continuing active interferences in elections as is unmistakably shown by the Court of Wards circular of the U. P. Government.

This Committee further notes that they are hampering the Congress in its election campaign by banning peaceful processions, meetings, hoisting of national flags and preventing movements of respected Congress leaders especially in the N. W. F. Province and in various other ways.

The Committee still hopes that effective measures will be taken by responsible officials of Government to remedy these matters so that the promise of neutrality given by them is duly fulfilled.

This Committee earnestly trusts that the hostile attitude of the Government will serve to stimulate the people to vigorous activity in support of the Congress candidates so that the victory of the Congress may be fully assured in spite of all these handicaps.

(2) Whereas the method of voting proposed for the illiterate rural voters of the Provincial Assembly in the United Provinces is completely destructive of the secrecy and freedom of the vote, this Committee is of opinion that this should be replaced by the system of coloured boxes with or without symbols which has been adopted by several other provinces and was proposed by the All-India and the Provincial Franchise Committees and originally recommended by the local Government itself as a very sound, safe and simple method, especially for illiterate voters.

### 8. Supplementary Manifesto (Sindh)

The supplementary manifesto sent by the Sind P. C. C. was approved. The P. C. C. was however to be informed that no stress should be laid on minor points and as far as possible they might be dropped from the document.

### 9. Recent Frontier Operation

The Committee, after some discussion about the situation in the frontier created by the recent raid, appointed a committee consisting of Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Bhulabhai Desai to consider the Frontier policy of the Government and the recent military operations there and make recommendations to the Committee and the Subjects Committee of the Faizpur Congress.

### 10. Disciplinary Rules

In suppression of the previous resolutions of the Working Committee in regard to disciplinary action the following rules were adopted by the Committee :—

1. The Working Committee may take disciplinary action against,

(i) Any Committee of the Congress which deliberately acts or carries on propaganda against the programme and decisions of the Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any higher authority or by an umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed.

(ii) Any member of a Congress Executive or elected Congress Committee who deliberately acts or carries on propaganda against the programme and decisions of Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any higher authority or by an umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed.

(iii) Any member of the Congress who deliberately acts contrary to the decisions of the Congress or deliberately disregards or disobeys any orders passed by any authority, umpire, arbitrator or commissioner duly appointed or is guilty of embezzlement of Congress funds or other fraudulent action in connection with funds and accounts, or of having broken a pledge given to the Congress or any subordinate committee or of any fraudulent action in connection with the enrolment of members of the Congress or election to a Congress Committee or who deliberately acts in a way which in the opinion of the Working Committee is likely to lower the power and prestige of the Congress so as to render his continuance as a member of the Congress undesirable in the interests of the Congress.

2. (i) In the case of a Committee of the Congress disciplinary action may be the suppression of such a Committee ; and such further action against offending individual members as may be necessary.

(ii) In the case of a member of any Congress Executive or elected Congress Committee, the disciplinary action may be his removal from such office or membership, and the fixation of a period during which he cannot be validly elected to any office or membership in any committee of the Congress.

(iii) In the case of a member of a primary Congress organisation disciplinary action may be a disqualification for a stated period from standing for any election to

the legislatures and local and municipal bodies or exercising any other right as a member during the unexpired period of his membership and the fixation of a period during which he may not be admitted to the membership of the Congress.

8 No disciplinary action shall be taken without an opportunity being given to the Committee or individual concerned to state its or his case and answer such charges as are made before the Working Committee.

4. The Executive Committee of the Provincial Congress Committee shall also have the power to take disciplinary action against their subordinate committees and members of any Congress Executive Committees and members of primary committees within their province. In all such cases the rules and procedure as are laid down for taking action by the Working Committee shall be open to the Committee or member against whom such disciplinary action is taken to appeal against it to the Working Committee provided that pending the appeal he obeys the order appealed against. The Working Committee may however stay the operation of the order.

5. When the Working Committee is not sitting, the President may take cognizance of all urgent matters in regard to disciplinary action and shall act on behalf of the Working Committee. In all such cases the decision of the President must be placed before the next meeting of the Working Committee for confirmation.

11. *Resolutions on the following subjects to be placed before the Subjects Committee on December 25 and 26 at Faizpur were passed :—*

1. Elections and Constituent Assembly.
2. Convention.
3. Detenues.
4. World Peace Congress.

*(These resolutions, with occasional verbal changes, were passed by the Congress and are given above as Faizpur Congress Resolutions).*

### *Faizpur 23rd. to 27th. December 1936*

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Faizpur on December 23-27, 1936. All members with the exception of Shris Jairamdas Daulatram and Sarat Chandra Bose were present.

1. The minutes of the last meeting held at Bombay were confirmed.

2. As the Auditors could not complete the audit of the offices of the All-India Congress Committee and the Treasurer in time, it was not possible to keep the audited accounts before the next meeting of the All India Congress Committee. The Working Committee therefore decided that the President should make a statement before the A. I. C. C. informing the members that as the audit of the accounts was not complete the audited accounts will be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C. Further, the following resolution was passed fixing the financial year for the Congress :

"The accounting year of the Congress for the purpose of keeping Congress accounts shall be from October 1 to September 30. But the accounts for the current year shall be audited as at November 15, 1936."

As the auditors' preliminary inspection note complained of certain technical irregularities in the system of keeping accounts at the offices of the All-India Congress Committee and the Treasurer, the Working Committee appointed a committee consisting of Shris Jannalal Bajaj, Bhuiabhai Desai and Mathuradas Trikamji, to consider, in consultation with the Auditors, the system of keeping accounts in the Treasurer's office and the A. I. C. C. office as well as other Congress accounts, central and provincial, and make such recommendations as they may consider necessary.

3. The Bombay P. C. C. had expressed its inability to organise election of delegates for the Faizpur Congress owing to the situation created in Bombay by the communal trouble. The matter was referred to the President who directed that elections in as many wards as possible be held. Where elections could not be held the last year's delegates were to continue to function. The old and the new delegates were then to elect the members to this year's A. I. C. C. The President of the B. P. C. C. however thought that the procedure was not warranted by the constitution and elections even in the wards free from trouble were not ordered. The matter was brought before the Working Committee and the Committee passed the following resolution :

"The Committee considered the representation of *Sri K. F. Nariman, President, B. P. C. C.*, regarding the non-election of delegates from Bombay. The Committee was of opinion that the procedure adopted by the B. P. C. C. after the President had given his directions in the matter, was not correct. But in view of all circumstances and the fact that there was no intentional disobedience of the President's directions, the Committee decided that the old delegates from Bombay should continue to function during the Faizpur Congress and after, till new delegates are elected. But the Committee is of opinion that such new delegates should be elected at the earliest possible opportunity after the Faizpur Congress and in any event not later than the end of February 1937. After such election of delegates, the new members of the A. I. C. C. should be elected."

4. Resolutions on the following subjects to be placed before the Subjects Committee on December 25, 26 and 28, 1936 were passed :

(1) Burma (2) Spain (3) B. N. Railway Strike (4) War Danger (5) Condolence (6) Excluded Areas (7) Frontier Policy (8) Natural Calamities (9) Suppression of Civil Liberties (10) Non-participation in the Coronation and other Imperialist Functions (11) Indians Overseas (12) The Congress Constitution and Mass Contracts (13) Colliery Disasters (14) Agrarian Programme (15) Appeal to Voters (16) Authority to the A. I. C. C. India Congress Committee.

) The resolutions passed by the Committee at its meeting at Bombay on December 9, 10 and 11 together with the resolutions passed at Faizpur on December 25-27, 1936 were placed before the Subject Committee of the 50th. Session of the Congress at Faizpur and with minor modifications in some of them were recommended for the open session. The resolutions as finally adopted by the Congress are given above as *Faizpur Congress Resolutions*.

### *Faizpur—29th. December 1936*

The first meeting of the Working Committee was held at Faizpur on December 29, 1936 at 2-30 p. m.

All members with the exception of *Shris Jairamdas Daulatram* and *Sardar Chandra Bose* were present. The President invited *Shris Rukmini Lakshminipathy, Mirdula Sarabhai, Jaiprakash Narayan* and *Rafi Ahmad Kidwai* to be present at the meeting. The discussion centred round the calling of the Convention, its date and place. It was decided that the Convention be called either at Delhi or at Bombay in the third week of March.

It was also decided that the next meeting of the Working Committee be held by the end of February at Wardha.

## THE PRESIDENT'S IMPORTANT CIRCULARS

Following two circular letters were addressed by the President to the Provincial Congress Committees directing them to set down to work in terms of the Congress resolution passed at Faizpur.

### I—Congress Resolutions

Dear Comrade,

The Faizpur Congress is over and now we have to set down to work to carry out the directions of the Congress. For the next six weeks or so most of us will be busy with the provincial elections, but that does not mean that we should postpone activity in regard to the other resolutions of the Congress. Indeed many of these resolutions lay down the Congress policy on important and vital matters and should therefore be placed before the electorate and the public. At the numerous public meetings that are being held in connection with the elections attention should be drawn to these resolutions of the Congress. The Election Manifesto should, of course, always be kept in the foreground. Particular attention should be invited to the following resolutions :

#### 1. Election and Constituent Assembly

This resolution, as embodying the Congress policy in regard to the elections, should be clearly explained and the implications of the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free India pointed out. It should be stated that this

Constituent Assembly is very different from an All Party Conference. It will be a Grand Panchayat of the nation, elected on an adult franchise, meeting when the reality of power has already shifted to the people so that they can give effect to their decisions without any interference from outside authority. It will be the only proper method of establishing a free democratic state for which the Congress stands.

## 2. Convention

The idea of this convention should be explained. It is not a substitute for the Constituent Assembly but a preparation for it, as well as for a disciplined and effective fight against the Federal structure and the rest of the new Act.

## 3. Suppression of Civil Liberties and Detenues

This suppression and Detenu question must always be emphasized before the public so that a strong public opinion against them should be built up.

## 4. Agrarian Programme

Although this is a provisional programme, it has great importance and the vast body of our rural electors and others will appreciate it. It should therefore find prominent place in our election campaign, especially in rural areas.

## 5. War Danger and Frontier Policy

The importance of preparing the public mind on the possibility of imperialist war and our resistance to it must always be kept in view. This requires wide-spread and ceaseless propaganda. As for the Frontier Policy of the Government, there is little realization of the injury this has done, and is doing, to India as well as her trans-border neighbours. It is desirable, therefore, that the public should realise this danger and injury.

## 6. Non-participation in the Coronation and other Imperialist Functions

This resolution is important and is essential that all Congressmen should always keep in mind. No Congressmen can take part in any official or semi-official functions which go to strengthen British Imperialism. In doubtful cases it is better to err on the side of non-participation than on the other side. In such cases reference can be made to our office.

Special attention must be drawn to the possibility of coronation functions being held here. Every such function, whatever it may be, must be avoided. Probably there will be no coronation celebrations in India for many months, but it is nevertheless desirable to educate public opinion on this subject from now onwards.

## 7. *Hartal* on April 1, 1937

The *hartal* which the Congress has fixed for April 1 is intimately connected with our agitation against the new Act. It should therefore be made a part of our election campaign and the country should be fully prepared for it. Detailed directions for it will probably be issued later but the general idea of this *hartal* should be popularised from now onwards.

Printed copies of Congress resolutions are being sent to you.

## II—Constitution of Mass Contacts

Dear Comrade,

I should like to draw your special attention to the "Congress Constitution and Mass Contacts" resolution passed by the Faizpur Congress. By this resolution a committee has been appointed to revise the constitution with a view to democratise the Congress still further. This Committee would like your co-operation. In this matter and any suggestions received will be carefully considered. It might be desirable for your P. C. C. to appoint a small sub-committee for the purpose. Reports and suggestions should reach us by the 31st March 1937.

Pending such constitutional changes, the Congress has suggested that a wider basis should be given to the Congress by making the primary unit a village or a mohalla. This can be done even under the existing All-India constitution, though it may be necessary to alter some provincial constitutions for the purpose. If so, I trust you will take early steps to make the necessary changes in your provincial constitutions. We hope that these village and mohalla committees will be functioning by the end of June 1937.

Under the terms of this resolution each P. C. C. has to appoint an Organising Secretary. Such a secretary should preferably be a whole-time worker. Kindly let us know soon what you propose to do in the matter.

## Congressmen opposing Congress Candidates

### Disciplinary Action

There were complaints from several provinces, of Congressmen seeking election in the provincial Assemblies in defiance of the decision of the Central Congress Parliamentary Committee and in violation of the pledge given by them in this behalf and in neglect of their duty as Congressmen. The President addressed the following letter to the presidents of the Provincial Congress Committees and the Provincial Parliamentary Boards to take necessary disciplinary action against such refractory Congressmen.

Dear Comrade,

Reports reach our office from time to time to the effect that some Congressmen are opposing official Congress candidates in the provincial elections. Whatever the merits of various candidates might be, once the final decision has been made by the Central Parliamentary Boards, there is no room for further discussion. All Congressmen must stand by that decision and any who deliberately go contrary to it invite disciplinary action on behalf of the Congress. The mere fact that an individual is personally anxious to go to the legislature that he or she is prepared to flout the Congress decision is the final argument against his candidature. Too great a desire to enter the legislatures, or to have any office, is almost a disqualification for it. And those whom this desire leads to pushing themselves onwards in opposition to the decision of their own organisation, are certainly not desirable candidates.

It was to meet such cases of flagrant indiscipline that the disciplinary rules of the Congress have been recently revised by the Working Committee. Those rules are meant to be acted upon. I want you therefore to report to our office immediately as follows:—1. Names of Congressmen, if any, who are opposing official Congress candidates, with further information as regards their constituencies and the name of our official candidates.

2. What steps has your committee so far taken against these rebel Congressmen or Congresswomen? Has any notice been issued to them to submit their explanation or to show cause why disciplinary action should not be taken against them?

3. What further steps does your committee propose to take against them?

4. I suggest that if you have not already taken steps this should be done immediately. In addition to this, please inform all such rebel Congressmen that they should submit their explanations direct to our office for my consideration. In the event of the local or provincial executive not taking adequate action in the matter, action will be taken by us. A person who opposes and injures Congress work cannot continue to have the privilege of calling himself a Congressman.

Please treat this matter as urgent.

## The Independence Day

January 26, 1937 is to be observed throughout the country as the Independence Day. This day, meetings are to be held everywhere even in the remotest villages, where the pledge of Independence is to be renewed by the audience. There should be flag-hoisting ceremony everywhere in the morning and householders and shopkeepers should be requested to fly the national flag on their premises. Other national work may be undertaken to suit local conditions and tastes to celebrate the occasion.

### Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

The following order of the Chief Secretary to Government, North-West Frontier Province was handed over to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan at Peshawar by the District Superintendent of Police of East Khandesh.

"Order under Section 5 of the North-West Frontier Province Public Tranquillity (Additional Powers) Act, 1932 (Act III). Peshawar, December 14, 1936.

"Whereas he is satisfied that there are reasonable and sufficient grounds for believing that you have acted in a manner prejudicial to the public tranquillity, and in furtherance of a movement prejudicial to the public tranquillity, the Governor-in-Council hereby directs that you shall not enter, remain or reside in the North-West Frontier Province; this order to remain in force until the 20th November, 1937

# The Indian National Congress

**Fiftieth Session—Faizpur—27th & 28th December 1936**

The setting in which the Fiftieth Session of the Indian National Congress met at Faizpur (Maharashtra) on the 27th. December 1936 was impressive in the extreme. At least 100,000 people, from far and near, had arrived and were assembled inside Tilak Nagar. Of these a large percentage came from the immediate vicinity of Faizpur. Hours before the session opened the gates to the vast amphitheatre were besieged by a surging mass of men and women who put a severe strain on the arrangements made for their entry into the amphitheatre and the seating accommodation made for them inside the oval where the session opened.

At the south end of the oval stood the dais made of bamboo, which has been the basic material for construction in Tilak Nagar. On the dais sat the leaders and the distinguished visitors including Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Malaviya.

About fifty yards from the dais was the rostrum, fifteen feet high, surmounted by wicker umbrellas above which the Congress Tri-colour Flag floated in the cold northerly wind.

Enclosing the oval was a bamboo palisade draped in white Khadi. The main gate which is at the north of the oval is a stern, austere structure in semi-Chinese pattern unadorned except by pieces of coloured Khadi here and there.

At 4-30 p. m., Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the President accompanied by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Malviya and other leaders arrived in procession and took his seat on the platform amidst cheers.

The sixty-thousand squatted in utmost orderliness and silence. The evening sun fell upon them but could hardly counteract the effect of the cold breeze in which the few flags that adorned the gateway of the rostrum and the dais fluttered and, with the saffron sari of women volunteers, were the only spots of colour.

The day's programme opened with the singing of "Vandemataram". The names of all those who had sent messages of greetings and good wishes were read out and Mr. Shankarrao Deo, Chairman of the Reception Committee then welcomed the delegates and visitors to the first village Congress and delivered his address.

Mr. Shankarrao Deo took forty minutes to deliver his address of welcome in Marathi. He came down the rostrum and mounting the platform gave Mr. Nehru the Presidential badge and garlanded him amidst cheers.

The President then went up to the rostrum. With folded hands he bowed to the audience which gave him lusty cheer.

When the General Secretary was reading the messages of good wishes and greetings Mahatma Gandhi, accompanied by Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi entered the amphitheatre from behind without the audience noticing his entry until he got up on the dais. This was the signal for all-round cheering and cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai". Mr. Gandhi was helped by Pandit Malaviya to get upon the dais and then each sat on either side of the President.

Almost immediately after arrival, Pandit Malaviya and Gandhiji entered into an animated conversation. Pandit Malaviya left earlier while the President was delivering his speech.

The President took an hour and forty-five minutes to deliver his address in Hindi. He had the English version by his side and spoke extempore. He ended the address with "Vandemataram". The President then moved the condolence resolution regarding the deaths of Dr. Ambedkar and others passed by the Subjects Committee yesterday and the House adopted it.

## **The Welcome Address**

Welcoming the delegates, Mr. Shankarrao Deo, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, said:

Fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy to offer a warm and cordial welcome to you all on behalf of Maharashtra at this 50th Session of the Indian National Congress for which we have all assembled here, this evening. This



session of the Congress in Maharashtra is unique in many ways. Such eminent patriots as the late Justice Ranade, Sjt. Gokhale and Lokamanya Tilak have been intimately associated with the building up of the Indian National Congress ever since its inception. All the same, Maharashtra has been graced but only once before (1895) by having won the honour to convene a session of the Congress. Most of those on whom the responsibility of the Congress organisation rests in Maharashtra at present, are comparatively young. A very large number of these have been inspired to turn to the service of the nation by the glorious example of Lokamanya Tilak. However, only a few of them have had the pleasure to take their first lessons in political life directly under that great leader. Some indeed have hardly had the privilege of seeing Lokamanya Tilak face to face. But all these workers have shouldered their share of work during the Non-Co-operation Movement; and subsequently in the two great upheavals of Civil Disobedience, they have been steelled by such suffering and sacrifice as came to their lot. Our province has great traditions of national service and as such it has been thrilled by the idea that the National Congress will hold its session in Maharashtra this year, after a period of over forty years. Young and old alike are happy to see this great concourse of men to-day. I am sure that all the noble sons of this soil who have blazed the path of Liberty in by-gone ages, by their great learning, by their deep spirituality or by the completeness of their renunciation and sacrifice for the Motherland will rejoice, and welcome this historic moment which links the past and the present in a mighty aspiration and effort for the future. The Indian National Congress has undoubtedly worked unceasingly during the last fifty years, for the well-being of the entire people of this land. Yet, it must be admitted, that for many years, it remained largely a movement of the elect. Now it has gradually reached the heart of rural India. And I consider it a unique privilege for Maharashtra that ours should be the first province to convene this gathering in a village.

#### SWARAJ IS MY BIRTH-RIGHT

I will remind you of a very significant event which marked the Poona Session of the Congress in 1895. In that year the late Jyotiba Phule who founded the Satyashodhak Samaj, had erected the statue of a Peasant in front of the Congress Pandal, with a view to draw the attention of that august gathering prominently to the Peasant and his problems. Commenting on this incident, Lokamanya Tilak had pointed out that what the Congress worked and struggled for, was really the well-being of the peasant and it was up to all Congressmen to carry the realisation of this fact to the farthest homestead. This village session of the Congress is the result of the loving labour and organisation in which peasants have taken a very prominent part; this itself is no small proof of the extent to which peasant India has begun to identify itself with the Congress movement. Those who derived their inspiration from these twain forces of the last generation—Lokamanya Tilak and Jyotiba Phule, have to-day joined hands in the service of the Nation on the platform of our glorious organisation. This is as much a matter of pride as of pleasure. That the venue of this session is fixed in the Khandesh is mainly a tribute to the steady and unostentatious service of our Congress workers in these districts, during the last 15 years. They have devoted their entire energies in the service of the villages and those who work on the land. And when the Congress holds its session in Maharashtra by whose name shall our city of bamboo and mats be known save that of Lokamanya Tilak who gave us the 'mantram' of nationhood "Swaraj is my Birth right". Mahatma Gandhi has laid special stress on the 'forgotten man'—the 'Daridra Narayan' and thus he has been successful in widening the basis of our movement so as to make the peasant the hub of our national politics. Under his guidance, a section of our Congress workers are endeavouring to revitalise the rural crafts and village industries. We have also had the benefit of his valuable advice and guidance in planning this present session. The Exhibition adjoining our session has been organised directly under his instructions. It is a great sight, when in this town blessed by the Highest, we meet amidst the peasantry to draw up a fresh plan for our struggle. Ours is a rugged, mountainous tract; it can boast of no great laurels in art and science; yet this is a land which has ever welcomed to its bosom all those who have loved and sacrificed for the liberation of their country. When we had announced our intention of holding this session in a village, you had given up looking for city comforts here. All the same, I am keenly aware of the many shortcomings you are feeling regarding the comforts and conveniences you have to do without during your stay here. I am

sure you will not miss the warm hearts that offer you their humble best, through all these failings.

#### !RANADE

Every mind that is nourished on the memories of Maharashtra must turn at this juncture in grateful remembrance to all those noble men who have tried to mould the course of events and the times in which they lived and worked. Alike as the rest of India, the disappearance of the Maharatha Empire left a gloom in which the prevailing note was one of inaction and apathy. The task which the late Justice Ranade set himself to do was to dispel this despondent inertia. He was out to make men think deeply so that they may act effectively. He stands out as the fountain head of inspiration, remarkable alike for his profound learning and equally for the mighty humanitarian urge which ever inspired every single activity of his life. His efforts at creating a sense of civic responsibility had begun to bear some fruit even before the inception of the Indian National Congress. His seminal inspiration had begun even then to move the minds of men around to newer thoughts and unexplored region of aspiration. The Sarvajanic Sabha of Poona was founded to express these newer concepts of civic responsibility. And because his was a catholic spirit, all the movements initiated by the late Justice Ranade were national rather than regional. Lokamanya Tilak has compared his efforts to those of Nana Fernavis, who struggled to uphold the Maharatha Empire in its last days of decline, by his superior intelligence and tireless efforts. Justice Ranade tried to awaken a generation of men who were still under the glamour of the benevolent autocracy of the Victorian Empire. However, his erudition and breadth of outlook as well as the liberalism of his social ideals, place Ranade on a plane far higher than Nana Fernavis.

#### INSOLENT PARODY OF FEDERATION

As early as in 1877 at the Delhi Durbar, Ranade and Sjt. Wasudeo Ganeesh Joshi had mooted the project for the National Congress and placed it before the leaders of public opinion in the country. Mr. Allan Hume had further discussed the policy and objects of the National Congress with Ranade and his circle before the idea took its final shape. The inaugural session of the Congress was fixed to meet at Poona. It was merely an accidental outbreak of cholera in Poona that forced the plans to be changed in favour of Bombay. Ten years after, the Congress session was held in Poona. At this gathering, Rao Bahadur Bhide who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee, talked of "United and Federated India." To-day, this conception has gained such a wide acceptance that he has become the subject of an insolent parody by our Imperialist overlords. They deny us our freedom and our inalienable right of self-determination, and force upon us the Charter of our slavery. They expect us to accept it quietly, because perhaps they have chosen to call it the Constitution of an Indian Federation. The question of the effective wrecking of this slave constitution and its substitution by a real system of self-government has come to occupy the central place in our struggle.

#### ADVENT OF TILAK

The flame of national self-respect was further fed by the efforts and sacrifice of such noble workers as Chiplunkar, Agarkar and the great Lokamanya Tilak. Even before the Indian National Congress came to be founded as the organ of our struggle, Tilak and Agarkar had willingly braved the then inconceivable hardships of jail, in the course of a struggle against the Foreign Power. Tilak used his entire energies of thought, word and action towards one single objective—the intensification of our political struggle. Our President, Pandit Jawaharlal, has rightly called him the first among our 'mass leaders'. He dragged the politics of his day from the stuffy atmosphere of the drawing room and the council chamber, and turned the public meeting into a forum of political education where problems were tackled without fear or favour. He utilised the famine of 1897 to work up a movement for agrarian relief. It was also his idea to appeal to the glorious days of Maharaja Shivaji to kindle into the breast a fresh yearning for freedom. It was far from his mind to use the memories of the Maratha Empire to fan the faction fire of communalism. On the other hand, it was an earnest effort to impress on the minds of our people, right in the heart of ignorance and poverty, that a nation cannot prosper where she is the sole mistress of her destiny.

Every movement initiated by Lokamanya Tilak had three clear objectives at the root. He had a very firm realisation of the intrinsic excellence of Indian culture. In spite of the present degeneration of our land, he held that our culture was based on the widest of spiritual principles, on which alone social harmony and well-being can be approached in the world. Hence he was convinced that Indian reconstruction must necessarily be attempted on the sound foundations of Indian tradition and culture, which represent the collective wisdom of generations. Thus alone could India make her destined contribution to the well-being and progress of mankind.

His second great axiom was the need for India to attain her freedom before she could save her great culture from falling into decadent ruin. He was firmly convinced that no nation can grow to the full stature of her manhood, unless she had removed the chains of foreign exploitation. He was therefore never satisfied with the mere ventilation of petty grievances against the established order; he was a votary of the cult of root and branch long before that cult gained its present popularity. Tilak was always very keen that the natural leaders of men in the towns should win the loyalty and love of the poorer people, and push ahead with the entire masses in the freedom's struggle. He was firmly convinced that radical reforms, whether social or industrial, educational or cultural, are impossible of achievement within the frame-work of the present Imperialist regime. To this end he advocated that India should pool her entire resources to create a strong and militant organ for the struggle which will be capable of great resistance.

His third great principle was the inculcation of a conscious spirit of nationalism among all the classes and creeds of India, that have held her in disunion throughout all these years. He never accepted any theory of transcendental divine right of one community or class to usurp the entire political power and continue to dominate the lives of all. Thus the Nationalism he dreamed of and struggled to realise in this land was essentially democratic in its content. He taught the upper classes to leave their snobbish aloofness and identify themselves with the common men around, and use their powers of education and ability for organising the nation for the struggle.

The cultural superiority of India, the necessity for complete self-government, and nationalism that gives the fullest expression to real democracy, these may well be said to be the national heritage of Tilak's political philosophy; and the wide acceptance that these ideas have gained among the entire politically conscious sections of our countrymen, has justified the name—Lokamanya, by which Tilak's popularity is fondly expressed by the nation. His ideas have left a lasting impress on the political life of our times. The National Congress had resolved that the Montford Reform Constitution, which came after the War, was 'inadequate, unsatisfactory, and disappointing.' To combat this Constitution, which denied us our right of self-determination, Tilak has founded the Congress Democratic Party. It was not his habit to indulge in constitutional niceties. His point of view always remained fixed to the polar star of Self-Determination, and its logical counterpart—Complete Independence. To-day we are giving a more concrete shape to our demand in the form of a Constituent Assembly convened on adult franchise, without any reference to the Foreign power. He tried to make clear his difference with those who stood for working the Montford Reforms on the Government's terms. And he called his theory of action by the term Responsive Co-operation. But all his speeches and writings of that time breathe an unmistakable spirit of non-co-operation and obstruction. This policy of consistent opposition was the basis of the policy determined a little later by the Swaraj Party; and this same uncompromising obstruction is to be the key-note of our resistance to the new constitution. The National Congress must consistently maintain the same uncompromising opposition to every Constitution, which is foisted on us in defiance of our right of self-determination.

#### GANDHIAN PROGRAMME

Imperialism has yielded us constitutional reform on the one hand and repression on the other throughout the last half a century. The Rowlett Act and the Amritsar massacre followed in the wake of the Montford Reforms. Dyers and O'Dwyers of the Punjab scandal went scotfree through the bureaucratic machine while they were hailed in their country as saviours of the Empire. It was felt that such an injury and insult to the Indian Nation should be met with some definite and dignified action. It was the rare good fortune of this land, to have amongst us Mahatma

Gandhi who could offer a new and a dynamic lead at such a time. He placed before the nation his programme of Non-Co-operation, and here Providence rung down the curtain on the career of the beloved Lokamanya Tilak. Thus in a very literal sense, a new chapter of our struggle was opened up. But the end of one epoch itself marked the beginning of another. The National Congress accepted in full the Gandhian programme of Non-Co-operation, and with the new programme came a new leadership.

The comparatively sudden demise of the lamented Lokamanya led to divided counsels and controversy among his lieutenants. As a matter of fact, the four main items of his policy, which Tilak had decided upon for the Congress Democratic Party, were : 1. The policy of obstruction inside the Legislatures, 2. The education and organisation of the electorate as well as of the large unenfranchised masses on the principle of self-determination. 3. The acceptance of the political line of the Congress consistently with the principle of Democracy, and 4. The carrying out of its discipline both in the letter and spirit. Unfortunately a section of his followers gave undue importance to that portion of his programme which accepted entry into the legislatures and thus raised unnecessary controversy between the politics and philosophy of Gandhi and Tilak. Another section of Tilak's lieutenants, however, stood by the principle of the spontaneous loyalty to the democratic mandates of National Congress. And these workers saw in the Gandhian line logical development of Tilak's militant politics. This section stood unflinchingly by the new and vigorous programme of the Congress. In the inevitable split between these conflicting viewpoints, the Congress organisation in our province received a severe set back. The division of nationalist forces led to the temporary victory of the reactionary and communal forces.

It is my honest conviction that the political programme of Mahatma Gandhi is the logical evolution of politics and ideals of Lokamanya Tilak. Where resistance within the limits of the law reaches its completeness, it must inevitably express itself in terms of Civil Disobedience. One comes across this line of reasoning several times in the writings of Lokamanya Tilak. He had presented before his followers this idea of bloodless revolution, while expounding the technique and policy of the Boycott from 1905 to 1908. Non-violence and the consequent discipline it entails are the essential and practical pre-requisites of preparing the masses for Civil Disobedience. The Boycott programme of Lokamanya Tilak carries within it the embryo of Non-Co-operation. Out of this political weapon of the boycott, Gandhiji has forged a powerful weapon of revolution by linking this Boycott with the spiritual principles of Ahimsa which bring into play the profoundest sources of power that are hidden within the human breast. The Swadeshi movement of Lokamanya Tilak has developed in the hands of Gandhiji as a broad-based organisation of khadi and the All-India Village Industries Association. When Gandhiji initiated his first essay in mass Satyagraha, Tilak was out of India. He took the first opportunity to state in public that his only regret was that he was not in India to join that Satyagraha. This ought to be a sufficient proof that Tilak was not an opponent of the Gandhian programme.

It was from this point of view alone that the large mass of people in the country as well as the practical idealists among our youth threw themselves in this struggle. All the same, Maharashtra could not continue to be in the advance guard of the fight for the lack of an outstanding personality who could forge a powerful organisation out of spontaneous enthusiasm and uprising of large sections of our people in the province during the non-co-operation movement and afterwards. The flame of non-co-operation was kept undimmed by the band of selfless youth who had thrown themselves in the non-co-operation movement. By their undying faith and sacrifice alone was this achievement rendered possible against great odds. The Mulshi Satyagraha, the National Schools in almost every district, Congress propaganda and Khadi work—all these paths of national service were literally strewn with thorns during the earlier years of trial. And Congress workers had to face very unfavourable conditions to keep their efforts going. But gradually this storm of ridicule and opposition subsided. The tempo of Maharashtra Politics began to be warmed up under the enthusiasm of the Youth Movement and the Boycott of the Simon Commission. And the sacrifices of Congress workers through the years of despair began to bear a rich fruit. The 1930-32 movements mark a great upheaval in the political awakening of Maharashtra. This movement laid bare a fund of hitherto unsuspected enthusiasm and love of the country, and the entire mass of our people stood by the Congress as one man during this hour of trial. It is now

universally realised that Gandhian programme was the rightful heir to the political legacy of Lokamanya Tilak and that though the underlying political philosophy of Tilak and Gandhi are distinct, they are certainly far more contradictory. The conflict of loyalties as between Tilak and Gandhi which held the politics of our province in the grip of inaction was finally resolved and a realisation of the unity of objective and effort galvanised the province to a new pitch of activity and sacrifice. And after 1933 as in other provinces, there emerged in the ranks of the Congress workers in Maharashtra a group of youngmen who were at the same time convinced Socialists.

To-day there are on the platform of the National Congress three distinct groups. The advocates of the legislative programme, the non-co-operating votaries of constructive work and village organisation, as well as those who stand by the mobilisation of the workers and peasants. Yet all these groups are united in their faith in the potency of Satyagraha as a powerful weapon of mass action. If the representatives of the Congress enter the legislatures to-day, it is with no desire to wring such concessions as we can out of that constitutional machine. We enter the legislatures admittedly to defeat the Imperialist conspiracy of denying with impunity our inalienable right of self-determination and "to wreck, uproot and destroy" the slave constitution which is being foisted on us in the teeth of the severest opposition of the entire nation. It is further our object to implement this task by convening a Constituent assembly based on adult franchise which alone will vindicate our birthright of self-determination and self-government. Between the successful wrecking of the present constitution and the convening of the Constituent Assembly, lies an inevitable phase of mass action. This fact is even admitted by those who stand for the Council programme. This is the crucial point which marks the difference between the Legislative programme of all other political parties on the one hand, and the Congress on the other. The Socialist in the Congress may differ from Mahatma Gandhi in the plan of economic reconstruction which they envisage in a Free India. All the same, even the Socialists admit that the immediate task before the country is the building up of a formidable United Front against British Imperialism in which every single force that is against the British domination is organised for intensifying our struggle. To-day all these groups also agree that the Indian National Congress is the central organ of this struggle and its technique of peaceful resistance is the only practical weapon of mass action. The mobilisation of every large section of our people in the town and country, through the programme of the National Congress, the intensification of our resistance to imperialist domination — so as to capture all power, these issues stand in the forefront of the struggle to-day. Large sections of our people, however, will not be very much the better for a mere transference of political power; and Swaraj to be real to the people as a whole, must include the levelling up of economic and social inequalities.

#### MASS CONTACT

It is true that there is a great difference between the political problems of a free nation and that of a colonial dependency like India. Yet the whole world is being rocked by revolutionary upheavals, social and political. These are the by-products of the class contradictions that have developed within our society out of the industrial transformation of a whole century. This has resulted in the attack of gradualist rationalism in world politics and the emergence of revolutionary political philosophy in one country after another. It is, therefore, only natural that the politics of a slave people as in India, should assume an increasingly revolutionary aspect. This phase of political action demands, besides statesmanship, the warlike qualities of heroism, an unflinching faith in the ultimate victory of one's cause as well as the preparedness to offer one's all at the altar of this ideal. Those who flinch from either sacrifice or sustained effort are found wanting in the trials of this struggle. India only learns this same lesson once again. People have refused to rally round those who merely wanted to lead them by a right of their superior intelligence. They have ever stood by those alone who staked their all in their experiments in the political field. The mobilisation of large masses is only possible with increasingly close contact and association with the masses. The late B. J. Oakhale thought about the national problems every moment of his existence. He has left his impress on our political life by his organisation of the Servants of India Society, where he collected together kindred spirits united in the service and education of the people. Tilak on the other hand revealed all the fire and dash of a revolutionary leader. A genius of action always gathers around him large masses of men, and he can therefore proceed to develop mass organisations

with comparative ease. In the theory and practice of Gandhiji's Satyagraha, there is a wonderful synthesis of Tilak's dynamic energy and the spirit of ceaseless service that inspired the whole life of the late Sir Gokhale. Revolutionary politics must ever combine personal valour with a spirit of dedication. And there can be only one organ welding the entire national resources of heroism and service.

#### TOLERANCE PLUS DISCIPLINE

A survey of the last fifty years of our national history will easily make it clear that the Indian National Congress has alone attempted this task with a certain measure of success. This is the most representative platform of our Nation. Every shade of advanced political opinion is reflected within the Congress to-day. The present organisation of the Congress is extremely broadbased and hence most closely democratic. Every one is free to present his own plan of action to the Congress. Any person may try to convert the majority to his view and get the verdict of approval to his policy or programme. It is also proper that no undue restriction should be placed on any group in trying to propagate his own ideology by all legitimate means, so long as care is taken not to water down the spontaneous and voluntary discipline of the Congress which is its special source of strength. There should be the wisest measure of tolerance regarding the particular schools of political philosophy. Only on these terms can the most dynamic group at any time continue to keep in its hands the leadership of the National Congress and on these terms alone will it develop to be our greatest organ of the Anti-Imperialist struggle. The central motif of Indian politics must therefore be to make the Congress policies increasingly more effective so as to win the loyalty and support of all who stand in the vanguard. This is only possible if freedom of thought is combined with ungrudging discipline to the will of the majority. This was the spirit in which Lokamanya Tilak approached the Congress. That the Congress should keep its doors open to all those who stood for self-government for India; that no section should be outcast,—this was the quintessence of Tilak's stance at Surat. The failure of the Congress leadership at the time, to keep a tolerant attitude led to a split. The expulsion of extremist forces made them an easy scape-goat to the repressive policies of the government. The consequent weakening of the national struggle led to the flouting of the Indian demand for Swaraj. But for that split in 1907, the Congress may have been in a position to wring out of British Imperialism the birth-right of every nation in the critical moment of the Imperialist War. This lesson can help us to realise the urgency at the present juncture, to put no rigid barriers to the intellectual yearnings of the youth of to-day. Such an effort has led before to an inevitable split in which the national forces alone suffered a loss. May we learn our lesson from that past failure! But I trust that the Gandhian insistence on non-violence and tolerance is the best guarantee against such a catastrophe.

The exploited masses of every land are being mercilessly crushed to-day under the double curse of Imperialist militarism. They are the helpless victims of their war-lust. Science has unfolded ever new secrets of nature for the comfort of man; but the magnitude of our knowledge has failed to add to the well-being of humanity as a whole, mainly because human reason—and good-will have betrayed a peculiar lack of vitality and strength to hold their own. The industrial transformation of the machine age has uprooted the fabric of our social existence, and all over the world there is an unprecedented upheaval, to determine what shall be the shape of things to come. The need of the hour is for such pioneers of social well-being who can indicate to the perplexed masses the direction in which the tasks of social reconstruction can be attempted. It is necessary that such effort should always be carried on within the context of the existing social situation. Every individual must be taught to realise that the fulfilment of individual existence, can only be sought through the unceasing pursuit of social well-being. This social whole is the ultimate basis of all true spirituality. It is not right that individual excellence, whether intellectual or physical, should be turned to selfish ends alone. That the real enrichment of individual existence, as well as its true fulfilment, can only come when every faculty is turned to promote the well-being of all. The precept of spiritual wisdom, must specially be realised by the powerful groups in every society. Power must go hand in hand with a determination to serve the social ends. Else the powerful will be a curse to society. It is the duty of all who feel the urgency of the preservation of cultural values and spiritual standards, ever to strive that the strong do not abuse their power; that the defenceless are assured of due protection;

it is their job to struggle for the establishment of a social order that gives every individual the largest freedom to develop his potential faculties. Such men alone should control the organised life of society. Then social institutions will foster a proper sense of duty. Where the social system conforms to the needs of Dharma—there alone does Dharma preserve that system. On such leaders of Men, also rests the duty, to identify themselves with the struggles of the exploited people; they must support every effort to liberate the down-trodden by means of their self-reliant resistance. The truly intelligent must use their resources to their double end. This effort is the apotheosis of spiritual endeavour, and in this task alone can one attain the happiness of having lived wisely and well. The world is full of organised power-lust and violence; if we would steer clear of these rocks, we must necessarily turn to our ancient heritage of wisdom, in order to find a solution to our specific problems. The place of honour in this new technique of revolution, is taken by a genuine spirit of non-violence, self-purification, and the insistence only to adopt righteous means alone. It is a token of our past grandeur that we have hit upon non-violent mass resistance as the peculiar technique of our struggle we can march steadily on towards our goal of Swaraj or Rama Raj, where is no room for oppression or inequality, only if we are struggling to change ourselves from within and without, where social reorganisation and individual transformation move hand in hand.

The concept of Rama Raj is deeply embedded in Indian hearts, and there is room enough to alter its form in response to the special needs of our times. The 'Rama Raj' of Rishi Vasishta and Vishwamitra was different from the 'Anand-Van-Bhawan' of Tukaram and Ramdas. Lokamanya Tilak made Shivaji's anniversary a national festival. All the same his vision of swaraj was not a mere replica of olden times. It was fully democratic; in the same manner Gandhian Rama Raj is—he has again and again insisted, democratic as well as egalitarian. What the world needs to-day is a political power that will bend its knee before the organised voice of the people; such a power must also honour all those noble souls who maintain themselves free from all trammels of power and wealth only to serve better. Rama Raj can be realised only when the path of duty is blazoned by a group of philosophers who can act effectively without stopping down from their pedestal of spiritual excellence; and human society can march steadily towards Satya Yuga, where the coercive arm of the State will wither away in the effortless will of Society to pursue common ends rather than individualist ones.

However much we may differ regarding this ultimate objective, our immediate task is the liberation of our people from the death grip of British Imperialism. On this point we of the National Congress speak with one voice. Hence the Congress becomes the spear-head of anti-Imperialist resistance and the nation gathers under its standard. If all these energies could be converted to peaceful resistance, I feel certain that we have every hope of approaching our objective of freedom from British Imperialism and the establishment of a state whose nature is determined by our own people.

Three hundred years ago Maharaja Shivaji of blessed memory vowed to lay down his all before the altar of freedom and the Brahmin intelligentsia which grieved up the Muslim governments of the time was won away by the passionate appeal of Ramdas. And when the upper classes saw the path of duty the peasants in their thousands stood by them shoulder to shoulder. To-day the peasant is looking for a similar lead. If the faith of peasantry can be linked to the dispassionate endeavour of our intelligentsia, Maharashtra will not fail to take her place of honour in the vanguard of the nation. The forces of the Congress are properly organised in Maharashtra. Communal distinctions have ceased to separate us and the increasing poverty of the mass of our people is filling them with a new sense of political discontent. If at this juncture the intelligentsia of our province will act up to the message of Lokamanya Tilak and accept the leadership of the masses the day of our liberation will be near indeed. If they renounce all pursuit of personal ends, the noble teaching of Gita Rahasya will be realised here and now.

#### AMONG THE PEASANTRY

It is not fair to detain you long. This is the first occasion in the glorious history of our organisation when the Congress Session meets in a village among the peasantry. Normal man has a natural aversion to newfangled innovations; his first instinct is against such changes. Few are they who love to leave the beaten track. This lesson has been re-learned in the matter of the present session. In the beginning there was

much opposition from friends and others alike. Much of it, it must however be admitted was genuinely well intentioned. The story of this session will make an interesting reading. It will incidentally also reflect on the undesirable traits of the present regime. But if we have faced opposition we must also generously acknowledge the willing co-operation of many. Truly has the Deity been described as *Aneko Bahumthara Vakthramthra*. This great construction is raised by a thousand hands of the great Purusha-Janata Janardhan. How else could this work have been achieved. Primarily I must mention the peasant who owned this land, who have allowed us the use of the same. This land has its peculiar limitations and not a little of the opposition was due to this factor. Withal, there is a sacred spot. The great Congress has met in its sessions on this ground. As we have triumphed over all our difficulties and begin this session, our trials and hardships have lost all their sting. Even so we are conscious of the comfort we have failed to provide you and I crave your indulgence for these shortcomings. I sincerely wish this session every success under the inspiring guidance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who, I trust, will give us a correct lead towards our cherished goal of freedom. Vande Mataram !

### Presidential Address

*Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru* then delivered his address. The following is the text :—

Comrades,

Eight and a half months ago I addressed you from this tribune and now, at your bidding I am here again. I am grateful to you for this repeated expression of your confidence, deeply sensible of the love and affection that have accompanied it, somewhat overburdened by this position of high honour and authority that you would have me occupy again, and yet I am fearful of this responsibility. Men and women, who have to carry the burden to-day, have a heavy and unenviable task and many are unable to cope with it. In India that task is as heavy as anywhere else and if the present is full of difficulty, the veil of the future hides perhaps vaster and more intricate problems. Is it surprising then that I accept your gracious gift with hesitation ?

### THE DETENUES AND THE DEPARTED

Before we consider the problems that face us, we must give thought to our comrades—those who have left us during these past few months and those who languish year to year, often with no end in prospect, in prison and detention camps. Two well-beloved colleagues have gone—Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari and Abbas Tyabji, the bearers of names honoured in Congress history, dear to all of us as friends and comrades, brave and wise counsellors in times of difficulty.

To our comrades in prison or in detention we send greeting. Their travail continues and it grows, and only recently we have heard with horror of the suicide of three detenues who found life intolerable for them in the fair province of Bengal whose young men and women in such large numbers live in internment without end. We have an analogy elsewhere, in Nazi Germany, where concentration camps flourish and suicides are not uncommon.

Soon after the last Congress I had to nominate the Working Committee and I included in this our comrade, Subhas Chandra Bose. But you know how he was snatched away from us on arrival at Bombay and ever since then he has been kept in internment despite failing health. Our Committee has been deprived of his counsel, and I have missed throughout the year this brave comrade on whom we all counted so much. Helplessly we watch this crushing of our men and women, but this helplessness in the present steels our resolve to end this intolerable condition of our people.

One who was not with us at Lucknow has come back to us after long internment and prison. We offer cordial welcome to Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan for his own brave self as well as for the sake of the people of the Frontier Province whom he has so effectively and gallantly led in India's struggle for freedom. But though he is with us, he may not, so the orders of the British Government in India run, go back home or enter his province or even the Punjab. And in that province of his the Congress organisation is still illegal and most political activities prevented.

I must also offer on your behalf warm welcome to one who, though young, is an old and well-tried soldier in India's fight for freedom. Comrade M. N. Roy has just come to us after a long and most distressing period in prison, but, though



shaken up in body, he comes with fresh mind and heart, eager to take his part in that old struggle that knows no end till it ends in success.

The elements have been unusually cruel to us during these past few months and famine and floods and droughts have afflicted many provinces and brought great suffering to millions of our people. Recently a great cyclone descended on Guntur district in the South causing tremendous damage and rendering large numbers homeless, with all their belongings destroyed. We may not complain of this because the elements are still largely beyond human control. But the wit of man can find a remedy for recurring floods due to known causes, and make provision for the consequences of droughts and the like, and organise adequate relief for the victims of natural catastrophes. But that wit is lacking among those who control our destinies, and our people, always living on the verge of utter destitution, can face no additional shock without going under.

#### THE ABYSS OF WAR

We are all engrossed in India at present in the provincial elections that will take place soon. The Congress has put up over a thousand candidates and this business of election ties us up in many ways, and yet I would ask you, as I did at Lucknow, to take heed of the terrible and fascinating drama of the world. Our destinies are linked up with it, and our fate, like the fate of every country, will depend on the outcome of the conflicts of rival forces and ideas that are taking place everywhere. Again, I would remind you that our problem of national freedom as well as social freedom is but a part of this great world problem, and to understand ourselves we must understand others also.

Even during these last eight months vast changes have come over the international

strident voice, introducing an open gangsterism in international affairs. Based as it is on hatred and violence and dreams of war, it leads inevitably, unless it is checked in time, to world war. We have seen Abyssinia succumb to it; we see to-day the horror and tragedy of Spain.

#### BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY AND FASCISM

How has this Fascism grown so rapidly, so that now it threatens to dominate Europe and the world? To understand this, one must seek a clue in British foreign policy. This policy, in spite of its outward variations and frequent hesitations, has been one of consistent support of Nazi Germany. The Anglo-German Naval Treaty threw France into the arms of Italy and led to the rape of Abyssinia. Behind all the talk of sanctions against Italy later on, there was the refusal by the British Government to impose any effective sanction. Even when the United States of America offered to co-operate in imposing the oil sanction, Britain refused, and was content to see the bombing of Ethiopians and the breaking up of the League of Nations system of collective security. True, the British Government always talked in terms of the League and in defence of collective security, but its actions belied its words and were meant to leave the field open to Fascist aggression. Nazi Germany took step after step to humiliate the League and upset the European order, and ever the British 'National' Government followed meekly in its whispered blessing.

Spain came then as an obvious and final test, a democratic government assailed by fascist-military rebellion aided by mercenary foreign troops. Here again while Fascist Powers helped the rebels, the League Powers proclaimed a futile policy of non-intervention, apparently designed to prevent the Spanish democratic government from combating effectively the rebel menace.

So we find British imperialism inclining more and more towards the Fascist Power, though the language it uses, as is its old habit, is democratic in texture and pious in tone. And because of this contradiction between words and deeds, British prestige has sunk in Europe and the world, and is lower to-day than it has ever been for many generations.

#### LESSONS FROM THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

So in the world to-day these two great forces strive for mastery—those who wish to crush this freedom under imperialism and Fascism. In this struggle Britain, though certainly not the mass of the British people, inevitably joins the ranks of

reaction. And the struggle to-day is fiercest and clearest in Spain, and on the outcome of that depends war or peace in the world in the near future, Fascist domination or the scorching of Fascism and Imperialism. That struggle has many lessons for us, and perhaps the most important of these is the failure of the democratic process in resolving basic conflicts and introducing vital changes to bring social and economic conditions in the line with world conditions. That failure is not caused by those who desire or work for the changes. They accept the democratic method, threatens to affect great vested interests and privileged classes, refuse to accept the democratic process and rebel against it. For them democracy means their own domination and the protection of their social interests. When it fails to do this, they have no further use for it and try to break it up. And in their attempt to break it, they do not scruple to use any and every method, to ally themselves with foreign and anti-national forces. Calling themselves nationalists and patriots, they employ mercenary armies of foreigners to kill their own kith and kin and enslave their own people.

In Spain to-day our battles are being fought and we watch this struggle not merely with the sympathy of friendly outsiders, but with the painful anxiety of those who are themselves involved in it. We have seen our hopes wither and a blank despair has sometimes seized us at this tragic destruction of Spain's manhood and womanhood. But in the darkest moments the flame that symbolises the hope of Spanish freedom has burnt brightly and proclaimed to the world its eventual triumph. So many have died, men and women, boys and girls, that the Spanish Republic may live and freedom might endure. We see in Spain, as so often elsewhere, the tragic destruction of the walls of the citadel of freedom. How often they have been lost and then retaken, how often destroyed and rebuilt.

I wish, and many of you will wish with me, that we could give some effective assistance to our comrades in Spain something more than sympathy, however deeply felt. The call for help has come to us from those sorely stricken people and we cannot remain silent to the appeal. And yet I do not know what we can do in our helplessness when we are struggling ourselves against an imperialism that binds and crushes.

#### THE WAR OF IDEAS

So I would like to stress before you, as I did before, this organic connection between world events, this action and interaction between one and the other. Thus we shall understand a little this complicated picture of the world to day, a unity in spite of its amazing diversity and conflicts. In Europe, as in the Far East, there is continuous trouble, and everywhere there is ferment. The Arab struggle against British imperialism in Palestine is as much part of this great world conflict as India's struggle for freedom. Democracy and Fascism, nationalism and a decaying capitalism, combat each other in the world of ideas, and this conflict develops on the material plane and bayonets and bombs take the place of votes in the struggle of power. Changing conditions in the world demand a new political and economic orientation and if this does not come soon, there is friction and conflict. Gradually this leads to a revolution in the minds of men and this seeks to materialise; and every delay in this change-over leads to further conflict. The existing equilibrium having gone, giving place to no other, there is deterioration, reaction, and disaster. It is this disaster that faces us in the world to-day and war on a terrible scale is an ever present possibility. Except for the Fascist Powers every country and people dreads this war and yet they all prepare for it feverishly, and in doing so they line up on this side or that. The middle groups fade out or, ghost-like, they flit about, unreal, disillusioned, self-tortured, ever-doubting. That has been the fate of the old liberalism every-where though in India perhaps those who call themselves Liberals, and others who think in their way, have yet to come out of the fog of complacency that envelops them. But we

"Move with new desires.

For where we used to build and love

Is no man's land and only ghosts can live

Between two fires",

What are these new desires? The wish to put an end to this mad world system which breeds war and conflict and which crushes millions; to abolish poverty and unemployment and release the energies of vast numbers of people and utilise

them for the progress and betterment of humanity ; to build where to-day we destroy. During the past eight months I have wandered a great deal in this vast land of ours and I have seen again the throbbing agony of India's masses, the call of their eyes for relief from the terrible burdens they carry. That is our problem ; all others are secondary and merely lead up to it. To solve that problem we shall have to end the imperialistic control and exploitation of India. But what is this imperialism of to-day ? It is not merely the physical possession of one country by another ; its roots lie deeper. Modern imperialism is an outgrowth of capitalism and cannot be separated from it.

It is because of this that we cannot understand our problems without understanding the imperialism and socialism. The disease is deep-seated and requires a radical and revolutionary remedy and that remedy is the socialist structure of society. We do not fight for socialism in India to-day for we have to go far before we can act in terms of socialism, but socialism comes in here and now to help us to understand our problem and point out the path to its solution, and to tell us the real content of the Swaraj to come. With no proper understanding of the problem, our actions are likely to be erratic, purposeless and ineffective.

The Congress stands to-day for full democracy in India and fights for a democratic State, not for socialism. It is anti-imperialist and strives for great changes in our political and economic structure. I hope that the logic of events will lead it to socialism for that seems to me the only remedy for India's ills. But the urgent and vital problem for us to-day is political independence and the establishment of a democratic State. And because of this, the Congress must line up with all the progressive forces of the world and must stand for world peace. Recently there has taken place in Europe a significant development in the peace movement. The World Peace Congress, held at Brussels in September last, brought together numerous mass organisations on a common platform and gave an effective lead for peace. Whether this lead will succeed in averting war, no one can say, but all lovers of peace will welcome it and wish it success. Our Congress was ably represented at Brussels by Shri V. K. Krishna Menon and the report that he has sent us is being placed before you. I trust that the Congress will associate itself fully with the permanent peace organisation that is being built up and assist with all its strength in this great task. In doing so, we must make our own position perfectly clear. For us, and we think for the world, the problem of peace cannot be separated from imperialism, and in order to remove the root cause of war, imperialism must go. We believe in the sanctity of treaties but we cannot consider ourselves bound by treaties in the making of which the people of India had no part, unless we accept them in due course. The problem of maintaining peace cannot be isolated by us, in our present condition from war resistance. The Congress has already declared that we can be no parties to an imperialist war, and we will not allow the exploitation of India's man power and resources for such a war. Any such attempt will be resisted by us.

The League of Nations has fallen very low and there are few who take it seriously as an instrument for the preservation of peace. India has no enthusiasm for it whatever and the Indian membership of the League is a farce, for the selection of delegates is made by British Government. We must work for a real League of Nations, democratically constructed, which would in effect be a League of Peoples. If even the present League, ineffective and powerless as it is, can be used in favour of peace we shall welcome it.

With this international background in view, let us consider our national problems. The Government of India Act of 1935, the new Constitution, stares at us offensively, this new charter of bondage which has been imposed upon us despite our utter rejection of it, and we are preparing to fight elections under it. Why we have entered into this election contest and we propose to follow it up has been fully stated in the Election Manifesto of the All-India Congress Committee, and I commend this manifesto for your adoption. We go to the legislatures not to co-operate with the apparatus of British imperialism, but to combat the Act and seek to end it, and to resist in every way British imperialism in its attempt to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitation of the Indian people. That is the basic policy of the Congress and no Congressman, no candidate for selection, must forget this. Whatever we do must be within the four corners of this policy. We are not going to the legislatures to pursue the path of constitutionalism or a barren reformism.

There is a certain tendency of compromise over these elections to seek a majority at any cost. This is a dangerous drift and must be stopped. The elections must be used to rally the masses to the Congress standard, to carry the message of the Congress to the millions voters and non-voters alike to press forward the mass struggle. The biggest majority in a legislature will be of little use to us if we have not this mass movement behind us, and a majority built on compromises with reactionary groups or individuals will defeat the very purpose of the Congress.

#### DEMAND FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

With the effort to fight the Act, and as a corollary to it, we have to stress our positive demand for a Constituent Assembly elected under adult suffrage. That is the very corner-stone of Congress policy to-day and our election campaign must not be conceived as something emanating from the British Government or as a compromise with British imperialism. If it is to have any reality, it must have the will of the people behind it and the organised strength of the masses to support it, and the power to draw up the constitution of a free India. We have to create that mass support for it through these elections and later through our other activities.

The Working Committee has recommended to this Congress that a convention of all Congress members of all the legislatures, and such other persons as the Committee might wish to add to them, should meet soon after the election to put forward the demand for the Constituent Assembly, and determine how to oppose, by all feasible methods, the introduction of the Federal structure of the Act. Such a Convention, which must include the members of the All-India Congress Committee, should help us greatly in focussing our struggle and giving it proper direction in the legislatures and outside. It will prevent the Congress members of the legislatures from developing provincialism and getting entangled in minor provincial matters. It will give them the right perspective and a sense of all India discipline, and it should help greatly in developing mass activities on a large scale. The idea is full of big possibility and I trust that the Congress will approve of it.

Next to this demand for the Constituent Assembly, our most important task will be to oppose the Federal structure of the Act. Utterly bad as the Act is, there is nothing so bad in it as this Federation and so we must exert ourselves to the utmost to break this, and thus end the Act as a whole. To live not only under British imperialist exploitation but also under Indian feudal control, is some thing that we are not going to tolerate whatever the consequence. It is an interesting and instructive result of the long period of British rule in India that when, as we are told, it is trying to fade off, it should gather to itself all the reactionary and obscurantist groups in India, and endeavour to hand partial control to the feudal elements.

The development of this federal scheme is worthy of consideration. We are not against the conception of a federation. It is likely that a free India may be a federal India, though in any event there must be a great deal of unitary control. But the present federation that is being thrust upon us is a federation in bondage and under the control politically and socially, of the most backward elements in the country. The present Indian States took shape early in the nineteenth century in the unsettled conditions of early British rule. The treaties with their autocratic rulers, which are held up to us so often now as sacred documents which may not be touched, date from that period.

It is worthwhile comparing the state of Europe with that of India. In Europe then there were numerous tiny kingdoms and princedoms, kings were autocratic, holy alliances and royal prerogatives flourished. Slavery was legal. During these hundred years and more, Europe has changed out of recognition. As a result of numerous revolutions and changes the princedoms have gone and very few kings remain. Slavery has gone. Modern industry has spread and democratic institutions have grown up with an ever-widening franchise. These in their turn have given place in some countries to fascist dictatorships. Backward Russia, with one mighty jump, has established a Soviet Socialist State and an economic order which has resulted in tremendous progress in all directions. The world has gone on changing and hovers on the brink of yet another vast change. But not so the Indian States; they remain static in this ever-changing panorama, staring at us with the eyes of the early nineteenth century. The old treaties are sacrosanct, treaties made not with the people or their representatives but with their autocratic rulers.

This is a state of affairs which no nation, no people can tolerate. We cannot recognise these old settlements of more than a hundred years ago as permanent

and unchanging. The Indian States will have to fit into the scheme of a free India and their peoples must have, as the Congress has declared, the same personal, civil and democratic liberties as those of the rest of India.

Till recent years little was heard of the treaties of the States or of paramountcy. The rulers knew their proper places in the imperial scheme of things and the heavy hand of the British Government was always in evidence. But the growth of the national movement in India gave them a fictitious importance, for the British Government began to rely upon them more and more to help it in combating this nationalism. The rulers and their ministers were quick to notice the change in the angle of vision and to profit by it. They tried to play, not without success, the British Government and the Indian people against each other and to gain advantages from both. They have succeeded to a remarkable degree and have gained extraordinary power under the federal scheme. Having preserved themselves as autocratic units, which are wholly outside the control of the rest of India, they have gained power over other parts of India. To-day we find them talking as if they were independent and laying down conditions for their adherence to the Federation. There is talk even of the abolition of the viceregal paramountcy, so that these States may remain alone in the whole world, naked and unchecked autocracies, which cannot be tampered with by any constitutional means. A sinister development is the building up of the armies of some of the bigger States on the efficient basis.

Thus our opposition to the federal part of the Constitution Act is not merely a theoretical one, but a vital matter which affects our freedom struggle and our future destiny. We have got to make it a central pivot of our struggle against the Act. We have got to break this Federation.

Our policy is to put an end to the Act and have a clean slate to write afresh. We are told by people who can think only in terms of action taken in the legislatures, that it is not possible to wreck it, and there are ample provisions and safeguards to enable the Government to carry on despite a hostile majority. We are well aware of these safeguards; they are one of the principal reasons why we reject the Act. We know also that there are second chambers to obstruct us. We can create constitutional crisis inside the legislatures, we can have deadlocks, we can obstruct the imperialist machine, but always there is a way out. The Constitution cannot be wrecked by action inside the legislatures only. For that, mass action outside is necessary, and that is why we must always remember that the essence of our freedom struggle lies in mass organisation and mass action.

The policy of the Congress in regard to the legislatures is perfectly clear; only in one matter it still remains undecided—the question of acceptance or not, of office. Probably the decision of this question will be postponed till after the elections. At Lucknow I ventured to tell you that, in my opinion, acceptance of office was a negation of our policy of rejection of the Act; it was further a reversal of the policy we had adopted in 1920 and followed since then. Since Lucknow the Congress has further clarified its position in the Election Manifesto and declared that we are not going to the legislatures to co-operate in any way with the Act but to combat it. That limits the field of our decision in regard to offices, and those who incline to acceptance of them must demonstrate that this is the way to, non-co-operate with the Act, and to end it.

It seems to me that the only logical consequence of the Congress policy, as defined in our resolutions and in the Election Manifesto, is to have nothing to do with office and ministry. Any deviation from this would mean a reversal of that policy. It would inevitably mean a kind of partnership with British imperialism in the exploitation of the Indian people, in acquiescence, even though under protest and subject to reservations, in the basic ideas underlying the Act, an association to some extent with British imperialism in the hateful task of the repression of our advanced elements. Office accepted on any other basis is hardly possible, and if it is possible, it will lead almost immediately to deadlock and impasse does not frighten us; we welcome it. But then we must think in terms of deadlocks and not in terms of carrying on with the office.

There seems to be a fear that if we do not accept office, others will do so and they will put obstacles in the way of our freedom movement. But if we are in a majority we can prevent others from misbehaving; we can even prevent the formation of any ministry. If our majority is a doubtful one, then office for us depends on compromises with non-Congress elements, a policy full of danger for our cause, and one which would inevitably lead to our acting in direct opposition

to the Congress mandate of rejection of the Act. Whether we are in a majority or in a minority, the real thing will always be the organised mass backing behind us. A majority without that backing can do little in the legislatures, even a militant minority with a conscious and organised mass support can make the functioning of the Act very difficult.

We have put the Constituent Assembly in the forefront of our programme as well as the fight against the federal structure. With what force can we press these two vital points and build up a mass agitation around them if we wobble over the question of office and get entangled in its web?

We have great tasks ahead, great problems to solve both in India and in the international sphere. Who can face and solve these problems in India but this great organisation of ours which has through fifty years' effort and sacrifice, established its unchallengeable right to speak for the millions of India? Has it not become the mirror of their hopes and desires; their urge to freedom, and the strong arm that will wrest this freedom from unwilling and resisting hands? It started in a small way with a gallant band of pioneers, but even then it represented a historic force and it drew to itself the goodwill of the Indian people. From year to year it grew, faced inner conflicts whenever it wanted to advance and was held back by some of its members. But the urge to go ahead was too great, the push from below increased, and though a few left us, unable to adjust themselves to changing conditions, vast numbers of others joined the Congress. It became a great propaganda machine dominating the public platform of India. But it was an amorphous mass and its organisational side was weak, and effective action on a large scale was beyond its powers. The coming of Gandhiji brought peasant masses to the Congress, and the new constitution that was adopted at his instance in Nagpur in 1920 tightened up the organisation, limited the number of delegates according to population, and gave it strength and capacity for joint and effective action. That action followed soon after on a country-wide scale and was repeated in later years. But the very success and prestige of the Congress often drew undesirable elements to its fold and accentuated the defects of the constitution. The organisation was becoming unwieldy and slow of movement and capable of being exploited in local areas by particular groups. Two years ago radical changes were made in the constitution again at Gandhiji's instance. One of these was the fixation of the number of delegates according to membership, a change which has given a greater reality to our elections and strengthened us organisationally. But still our organisational side lags far behind the great prestige of the Congress, and there is tendency for our committees to function in the air, out off from the rank and file.

#### CONGRESS CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

It was partly to remedy this that the Mass Contacts resolution was passed by the Lucknow Congress, but unhappily the Committee that was in charge of this matter has not reported yet. The problem is a wider one than was comprised in that resolution for it includes an overhauling of the Congress constitution with the subject of making it a closer knit body, capable of disciplined and effective action. That action to be effective must be mass action, and the essence of the strength of the Congress has been this mass basis and mass response to its calls. But though that mass basis is there, it is not reflective in the organisational side, and hence an inherent weakness in our activities. We have seen the gradual transformation of the Congress from a small upper class body, to one representing the great body of the lower middle classes, and later the masses of this country. As this drift to the masses continued the political role of the organisation changed and is changing, for this political role is largely determined by the economic roots of the organisation.

We are already and inevitably committed to this mass basis for without it there is no power or strength in us. We have now to bring that into line with the organisation, so as to give our primary members greater powers of initiative and control, and opportunities for day to day activities. We have, in other words, to democratise the Congress still further.

Another aspect of this problem that has been debated during the past year has been the desirability of affiliating other organisations, of peasants, workers and others, which also aim at the freedom of the Indian people, and thus to make the Congress the widest possible joint front of all the anti-imperialist forces in the country. As it is, the Congress has an extensive direct membership among these groups; probably 75 per cent of its members come from the peasantry. But, it is argued, that

functional representation will give far greater reality to the peasants and workers in the Congress. This proposal has been resisted because of a fear that the Congress might be swamped by new elements, sometimes even politically backward. As a matter of fact, although this question is an important one for us, any decision of it will make little difference at present; its chief significance will be as a gesture of goodwill. For there are few well-organised workers' or peasants' unions in the country which are likely to profit by Congress affiliation. There is not the least possibility of any swamping, and in any event, this can easily be avoided. I think that now or later some kind of functional representation in the Congress is inevitable and desirable. It is easy for the Congress to lay down conditions for such affiliation, so as to prevent bogus and mushroom growths or undesirable organisations from profiting by it. A limit might also be placed on the number of representatives that such affiliated organisations can send. Some such recommendation, I believe, has been made by the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee.

The real object before us is to build up a powerful joint front of all the anti-imperialist forces in the country. The Congress has indeed been in the past and is to-day, such a united popular front, and inevitably the Congress must be the basis and pivot of united action. The active participation of the organised workers and peasants in such a front would add to its strength and must be welcomed. Co-operation between them and the Congress organisation has been growing and has been a marked feature of the past year. This tendency must be encouraged. The most urgent and vital need of India to-day is this united national front of all forces and elements that are ranged against imperialism. Within the Congress itself most of these forces are represented, and in spite of their diversity and difference in outlook, they have co-operated and worked together for the common good. That is a healthy sign both of the vitality of our great movement and the unity that binds it together. The basis of it is anti-imperialism and independence. Its immediate demand is for a Constituent Assembly leading to a democratic State where political power has been transferred to the mass of the people. An inevitable consequence of this is the withdrawal of the alien army of occupation.

#### PAINFUL CONTRASTS

These are the objectives before us, but we cannot ignore the present-day realities and the day-to-day problems of our people. These ever-present realities are the poverty and unemployment of our millions, appalling poverty and an unemployment which has even the middle classes in its grip and grows like a creeping paralysis. The world is full of painful contrasts to-day, but surely nowhere also are these contrasts so astounding as in India. Imperial Delhi stands, visible symbol of British power, with all its pomp and circumstance and vulgar ostentation and wasteful extravagance; and within a few miles of it are the mud huts of India's starving peasantry, out of whose meagre earnings these great palaces have been built, huge salaries and allowances paid. The ruler of a State flaunts his palaces and his luxury before his wretched and miserable subjects, and talks of his treaties and his inherent right to autocracy. And the new Act and Constitution have come to us to preserve and perpetuate these contrasts, to make India safe for autocracy and imperialist exploitation.

#### OUR PROBLEMS.

As I write, a great railway strike is in progress. For long the world of railway workers has been in ferment because of retrenchment and reduction in wages and against them is the whole power of the State. Sometime ago there was a heroic strike in the Ambernath Match Factory near Bombay, owned by a great foreign trust. But behind that trust and supporting it, we saw the apparatus of Government functioning in the most extraordinary way. The workers in our country have yet to gain elementary rights; they have yet to have an eight-hour day and unemployment insurance and a guaranteed living wage.

But a vaster and more pressing problem is that of the peasantry, for India is essentially a land of the peasants. In recognition of this fact and to bring the Congress nearer to the peasant masses, we are meeting here to-day at the village of Jaipur and not, as of old, in some great city. The Lucknow Congress laid stress on this land problem and called on the Provincial Committees to frame agrarian programmes. This work is still incomplete, for the vastness and intricacy of it has demanded full investigation. But the urgency of the problem calls for immediate

solution. Demands for radical reforms in the rent and revenue and the abolition of feudal levies have been made from most of the provinces. The crushing burden of debt on the agricultural classes has led to a wide-spread cry for a moratorium and a substantial liquidation of debt. In the Punjab *Kasra* (Debt) Committees have grown up to protect the peasantry. All these and many other demands are insistently made and vast gatherings of peasants testify to their inability to carry their present burdens. Yet it is highly doubtful if this problem can be solved piecemeal and without changing completely the land system. That land system cannot endure and an obvious step is to remove the intermediaries between the cultivator and the State. Co-operative or collective farming must follow.

The reform of the land system is tied up with the development of industry; both large scale and cottage, in order to give work to our scores of millions of unemployed and raise the pitiful standards of our people. That again is connected with so many other things—education, housing, roads and transport sanitation, medical relief, social services, etc. Industry cannot expand properly because of the economic and financial policy of the Government which, in the name of Imperial Preference, encourages British manufactures in India and works for the profit of Big Finance in the City of London. The currency ratio continues in spite of persistent Indian protests; gold has been pouring out of India continuously now for five years at a prodigious rate, though all India vehemently opposes this outflow. And the new Act tells us that we may do nothing which the Viceroy or the Governor might consider as an unfair discrimination against British trade or commercial interests. The old order may yield place to the new but British interests are safe and secure.

And so one problem runs into another and all together form that vast complex that is India to-day. Are we going to solve this by petty tinkering and patchwork with all manner of vested interests obstructing us and preventing advance? Only a great planned system for the whole land and dealing with all these various national activities, co-ordinating them, making each serve the larger whole and the interests of the mass of our people, only such a planned system with vision and courage to back it, can find a solution. But planned systems do not flourish under the shadow of monopolies and vested interests and imperialist exploitation. They require the air and soil of political and social freedom.

These are distant goals for us to-day though the rapid march of events may bring us face to face with them sooner than we imagine. The immediate goal—interdependence—is nearer and more definite, and that is why perhaps we escape, to a large extent, that tragic disillusion and hopelessness which affects so many in Europe.

We are apparently weak, not really so. We grow in strength, the Empire of Britain fades away. Because we are politically and economically crushed, our civil liberties taken away, hundreds of our organisations made illegal, thousands of our young men and women always kept in prison or in detention camp, our movements continually watched by hordes of secret servicemen and informers, our spoken word taken down, lest it offend the law of sedition, because of all this and more we are not weaker but stronger, for all this intense repression is the measure of our growing national strength. War and revolution dominate the world and nations arm desperately. If war comes or other great crisis, India's attitude will make a difference. We hold the keys of success in our hands if we but turn them rightly. And it is the increasing realisation of this that has swept away the defeatist mentality of our people.

Meanwhile, the general election claims our attention and absorbs our energy. Here too we find official interference, in spite of denial, and significant attempts to prevent secrecy of voting in the case of illiterate voters. The United Provinces have been singled out for this purpose and the system of coloured boxes, which will be used everywhere else, has been ruled out for the U. P. But we shall win in these elections in spite of all the odds—State pressure, vested interest, money.

That will be but a little step in a long journey, and we shall march on, with danger and distress as companions. We have long had these for our fellow travellers and we have grown used to them. And when we have learnt how to dominate them, we shall also know how to dominate success.

After the Presidential Address, *Pandit Nehru* moved the condolence resolution regarding the deaths of Dr. Ansari, and others passed by the Subjects Committee yesterday and the House adopted it. *Pandit Nehru* then announced that *Mahatma Gandhi* would address the House, which received the announcement with cries of "*Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai*" and loud cheers. Mr. Gandhi was the recipient of a great ovation, when he rose to speak. Mr. Gandhi then addressed the House.



## MAHATMA GANDHI'S ADDRESS

In the course of his speech Mahatma Gandhi said that they would be tired by this time. He himself had nothing much to say. What he had to say he had already said in the morning at the exhibition. He did not want to repeat it. He was happy to see such a big assembly there because the responsibility of bringing the Congress to a village was his. When the Reception Committee authorities came to him he told them certain things. He told them to throw the responsibility on God and start work. There had been several criticisms against the step taken in holding the Congress in a village. Several newspapers had criticised it and had dwelt upon the shortcomings. The Reception Committee did not have sufficient money. Nevertheless, they all saw that the Congress here was the same as before. In fact, the village Congress had turned out to be a bigger one than expected. He had told the Reception Committee to be prepared for the needs of one lakh of people. During the flag salutation this morning alone, according to the estimate of some, two lakhs of people were present. Allowing for differences for estimate, he was sure there must have been at least one lakh of people. Such a large influx of people had made the Reception Committee authorities fear whether they would be able to meet their needs.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi paid a compliment to the bangis and said there were people among those who came to Faizpur who did what they should not do in the interests of sanitation. They no doubt had a hospital, but it was not big enough for the large number of people to be treated at once.

Mahatma Gandhi said he had in fact suggested that the Reception Committee should now ask people to begin to leave. He felt, however, that they should hereafter continue to hold the Congress in a village. They should take a vow then and there not to hold the Congress in towns in future. The drawbacks that they saw there could easily be obviated. There was no doubt in his mind that it would be very easy to hold the Congress in the villages. By doing so the amount they spent could be considerably economised, but according to him, even that amount was big enough. He had wanted the Faizpur session to be completed within Rs. 5,000 but that was found to be not possible. They did not get sufficient support and they had to pay a big rent for the ground. His idea was that no rent should be paid for the ground on which the Congress was held. The Reception Committee were also compelled to hold the Congress in Khandesh because they could not have got the same number of volunteers elsewhere. However, in spite of the impediments, the Reception Committee had carried on their work and though there was strain they did not lose heart. If they really wanted to go into the villages and take the message of the Congress to the villages they should take a vow to hold all future Congresses in the villages.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said: "The villages also will have to understand what you people who want to get Swaraj want them to do. The President and the Socialists are saying that you merely sleep after paying four annas. The mere payment of four annas does not show that you are real Congressmen. Preparations for the Congress are not over in a day but they take a number of months. They have to go round and get things ready. This sort of connection that has been established should be continued all the year through. If you want this you must take a vow that you shall hold the future Congresses in villages.

"The decision of a Constituent Assembly can be taken only when you have Swaraj at your door. You can call a Constituent Assembly when you have got full strength. It cannot meet in Delhi but in the remotest village. Swaraj can be got only by increasing our strength on all sides. If we increase that strength we can see Swaraj coming soon. What I asked you to do in 1920 is still left unaccomplished to-day—charka, prohibition, removal of untouchability. If you leave these things unattained take to your heart an old man saying it—if you do not carry out these you will have lost Swaraj."

Immediately after his speech, Mr. Gandhi left the session.

## Proceedings and Resolutions\*

The President then put from the chair the resolutions on (1) World Peace Congress, (2) Burma, (3) Spain, (4) Excluded Areas, and (5) Natural Calamities, and all passed unanimously.

\*For Text of Resolutions see pages 201-206.

**War Danger**

*Acharya Narendra Dev* then moved the resolution regarding "War Danger". He said we were living in an age of revolution. The economic and political situation throughout the world were tumbling down. They had to consider what were the reasons for this tumbling down of age old customs. The old economic structure of society was crumbling all over the world but still it was in existence in some places and they could take it that it was on its last legs. Imperialism, after reaching its summit, was slowly coming down.

*Mr. Sajid Zakir*, seconding the resolution, declared that there was only one war in which India should take part. That was the war that would lead her to her Independence.

*Mr. Achut Patwardhan* explained the resolution in Maharatti, after which the resolution was passed unanimously.

**Frontier Policy**

*Mr. Bhulabhai Desai* moved the resolution on Government's "Forward Policy" in the Frontier. *Mr. Desai*, speaking on his resolution, declared the Government was only intent upon spending on the army budget on one pretext or another, whether it was danger from China or from Russia. Government had perforce to talk of imaginary danger and of civilising the uncivilised people. Italy also talked in the same language regarding Abyssinia. Government spoke of building roads. How were they building? With machine-guns on the one side, with the army on another and aeroplanes roaring overhead. There was a great need for roads in India. But no thought was given to building them. The only reason for building roads was to rush troops although the ostensible reason given was that it was to provide work for the tribes.

Referring to the ban on *Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan*, *Mr. Desai* asked how could he and his associates suddenly give up non-violence as soon as they crossed the Frontier.

*Sardar Sardul Singh Cavasheer*, seconding, said one of the most improper things the British Government was doing was to make Indians fight with Frontier tribes. Pathans and Afghans were their friends, but the Government had asked us to fight them. Indian troops had been taken to Burma and asked to fight Burmans. The result was that their own brothers had become enemies. Before the British came to India, Pathans and Indians were living as brothers but after the British advent, nearly twenty expeditions had been taken out against the trans-Frontier tribes by creating scores that the Frontier men had taken away their children and their women. From personal knowledge he could say they were very well-behaved, and a more hospitable people could not be found anywhere in the world. It was untrue to say that they were behaving in the way alleged by the British Government in India. Pathans were full of enthusiasm for freedom and the British Government wanted to kill this enthusiasm and therefore they had started their forward policy. "We, as Congressmen, want to declare that we are with them and they with us. They are fighting for their freedom. We are prepared to join hands and fight for the freedom of both."

The resolution was passed unanimously and the House adjourned.

**Second Day—Faizpur—28th. December 1936**

When the Congress session resumed sitting to-day at 4 p. m., the vast amphitheatre had not been filled by visitors, who were still pouring in, presumably under the impression that the session would continue for another day and they could attend at leisure.

President *Nehru*, accompanied by leaders, arrived precisely at 4 p. m. and after brief consultations regarding the speakers on each resolutions were to be moved, he went up the rostrum and was loudly cheered.

**RELEASE OF DETENUEES**

"It is our desire to close the session to-day and, therefore, I want the House to help me in the matter," said the President. I hope you will not make long and unnecessary speeches." Thereafter, he announced that he would move from the chair non-controversial resolutions. He moved the resolution on detainees.

The resolution *inter alia* demanded the immediate release of detainees, the removal of all bans and restraints on Congress workers, sent greetings to the suffering detainees, expressed alarm at the recent suicides among detainees, condemned conditions in which they were kept, demanded an enquiry into the suicides, sent condolences to the bereaved.

families and condemned the revival of Andamans as a penal jail, which had been condemned by the Government Enquiry Committee.

The resolution was passed.

#### Indians Overseas

The resolution regarding Indians overseas and the resolution expressing sympathy with victims in colliery disasters were next moved from the chair and passed unanimously.

The President then moved from the chair two resolutions one expressing sympathy with the B. N. Railway strike and the other dealing with mass contact. Both were passed unanimously.

#### Venue of Next Session

The next resolution to be put from the Chair was the resolution passed by the Subjects Committee this morning authorising the All-India Congress Committee to decide the time of holding the annual session of the Congress in a month other than December, if the A. I. C. C. thought it necessary.

Mr. *Subramania Aiyar* (Tamil Nadu) said that by the resolution being put from the chair, delegates were placed in an embarrassing position. The Congress constitution contained the provision that the annual session should be held in December. His objection was that the precedent should not be set of the Working Committee changing bye-laws as it pleased. Only the plenary session of the Congress should have the right to make any change.

The President intervened and said that it was a matter for the Executive Committee to decide the convenient time. The change was not a vital one.

The delegate said: "Let us first decide where we should hold the next Congress. Then we will decide the time."

Finding that there was opposition to the resolution, the President asked Mr. N. V. Gadgil to formally move a resolution authorising the A. I. C. C. to decide the month in which the next session of the Congress should be held.

Mr. *Subramaniam* said that the introduction of the word 'next' practically meant that he had won his point.

Mr. K. F. Nariman, opposing the resolution passed by the Subjects Committee, was different from the one moved by Mr. Gadgil. He objected to the word 'next' being included and said that the time of the Congress session had been experimented with before and that the Lucknow session had ultimately changed it. The month of December was the best from many points of view.

After a delegate from Mahakoshal had opposed the change and Swami Sahajanand had supported it, the resolution was put to vote and passed by a large majority.

#### Suppression of Civil Liberties

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant moved the resolution on the suppression of civil liberties. In a very powerful speech, Pandit Pant said that the suppression of civil liberties was going on daily. For instance, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, who was anxiously looked for to by his people was banned from entering the Frontier Province in spite of declarations in the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures that the elections would not be interfered with. But those declarations were not strictly adhered to. Again, was there any Indian heart which was not moved by the happenings in Bengal?

Continuing, Pandit Pant said that even newspapers in this country did not enjoy any freedom. Before the very start, they had to make deposits of securities. Even British Judges had held that under the Press Act any sort of writing could be penalised.

While Pandit Pant was making his speech, Kisans entered the pandal and took their seats near the rostrum.

Mr. M. S. Aney seconded the resolution in a forceful Marathi speech. He detailed instances of suppression of civil liberties and said that the people in India had become so accustomed to these suppressions of elementary rights these days that they had become indifferent.

The Civil Disobedience movement had been stopped, said Mr. Aney, yet the repressive laws still remained on the statute books. He also referred to the instance of Vinayakram Savarkar's incarceration.

Mr. *Bhupenar Chakravarty* said that he came from a province where suppression of liberty was rampant. The finest flower of Bengal was in travail. There was no family which had not shed tears for someone near and dear. Taking the instance of

Midnapore, he said that every Congress body there was under ban. The people had been shut out of Midnapore because some relative had taken part in Civil Disobedience. Articles and news which could be published outside Bengal could not be printed in the province. The remedy for all this lay in their hands. The resolution was passed.

### Parliamentary Programme

Babu *Rajendra Prasad* next moved the resolution on elections and Constituent Assembly. He declared that none need imagine that those who went to the legislatures would bring them nearer Swaraj. The big work before the Congress did not lie in Councils, but outside. Though there was difference on acceptance or non-acceptance of office, there was none as regards the object of wrecking the constitution.

Pandit *Madan Mohan Malaviya* rose to second the resolution and was greeted with prolonged cheers and cries of "Malaviya-ki-jai". Pandit Malaviya asked, "Why do we reject the new constitution?" We cannot achieve Swaraj through this constitution. Not only does it not give freedom but it takes away what little freedom we have. So long as the Britishers are in India, they will look to their own benefit and not to the benefit of India. If any impartial tribunal were to look at it, it will be found that the constitution has been forced on India in order to enforce British rule. For the last 50 years, we have been crying that we should be allowed to rule our country. The world knows this, India is one of the biggest countries in the world. Look at its past. Can any one doubt that it had a glorious past? What is to happen to India has been decided by the British Parliament 8,000 miles away. Britain has often declared that India will be ruled in consultation with Indians. But not on any one occasion has Britain consulted Indians.

"We are fit to rule ourselves and we have not lost the power of ruling which our ancestors possessed. While four countries in the world, including Egypt, have got freedom, is there an Indian whose heart is not moved at this deplorable state of India to-day? In spite of our capacity and intelligence, we are slaves of the British. Are we not ashamed? The British people say, 'work this Act for ten years and then we will give you another instalment.' Can we tolerate this? I am convinced that as long as we are controlled by the British Parliament, we cannot have Dominion Status or any other status.

Look at what is happening in free countries. Look at Japan. She is respected all over the world. Other countries which were really on the verge of collapse are getting freedom. I am deeply moved. It is our right to have freedom. Even if British rule in India were heavenly, yet we cannot tolerate it. We must have Swaraj. Those who are self-centred and filled with pride refuse to realise this plight of India. Not only Britishers are afraid and express surprise at our wish to be independent of the British people, but there are many Indians who express surprise at our determination to have complete independence. Is there any Indian who thinks that we should not rule ourselves and should not be independent? (No, No' was the cry from the vast concourse). Is there any Indian who does not wish that our status should be as that of the British? (No,' was the cry again.)

We have to decide and take a vow that we will not be happy until we attain liberty. We should be ashamed that we are not free. It is a matter of shame and sorrow. It is essential that we should forget our differences and join hands. We want the friendship of Britain. If Britain wants our friendship, she can have it. But she wants us to be her dependents. We do not want it. Do we not want an army under our control? Look at the preparations being made for war. Look also at the way that other countries are taking steps for the betterment of their people. It is 50 years since I have been in the Congress. I may not live long and I may die with the sorrow that India is not free. But yet, I also hope that I will live to see India free." Proceeding, Pandit *Malaviya* asked how many of those present knew the conditions of Kisans. Children did not have enough food to eat, nor enough clothing to wear. The remedy for all this lay in Swaraj. But how many wanted Swaraj? He put the question to the audience, "Do you want Swaraj?" and paused for answer. "Yes", came the reply from the audience.

"This cry", he said, "should ring all round India not once but all through the year. We should see that the Congress is strengthened. Let every man, woman and child see and know what the Congress is and see that it is strengthened. India has every kind of material to make her happy. But she is not united and, therefore, she is under the intolerable yoke of foreign rule. The time is gone when any one community should join to pull together. So long as we do not feel the shame of foreign rule, our conditions will not improve."

Pandit Malaviya reminded the audience of the saying that the Britisher will not give way until there was fear in him. "You should prepare to create that fear and then the British Government will recognise our demands and concede them but one day's shouting in an open session of the Congress is not enough. We have to work all the 365 days, throw away our cowardice, become brave and take a vow to be free."

Concluding, Pandit Malaviya said, "I have served this country for 50 years now. I am about to take my leave of this country. I am about to take my leave of this world. I can hardly express to you the agony that I feel when I think that I may have to pass away without seeing my country free from this bondage of slavery. I call upon you, my countrymen, to make your maximum effort for hastening the dawn of freedom in this land of ours, so that old men like us may be spared that agony and humiliation in our last moments. I charge you as one of the oldest comrades in arms to go ahead with the determination to be free and you will find that all obstructions and difficulties have melted away and that your path to the cherished goal has been smoothened."

Mr. Dange moved an amendment to the effect that the state visualised in the resolution should come into existence through an uncompromising anti-imperialist struggle and seizure of power. He declared that against one constitution, they could not impose another. They could not impose the slogan of Constituent Assembly on the slogan of constitution. Before the Constituent Assembly came, they should capture power and then the Constituent Assembly could frame the scheme that the country wanted.

Sardar Sardul Singh Cavasheer moved an amendment to the effect that no Congressmen shall accept office under any circumstance and Congressmen shall bring to an end the normal working of the constitution in any way nor accept any responsibility for the working of the constitution. He asked if wrecking the constitution was their object, why should they not state it now? As long as they did not definitely decide this question, they would be taking the country backward. He warned the house that if they accepted Ministership, they would be giving a blow to Mahatmaji's revolutionary programme of 1921. Though Gandhiji had left the Congress, the spirit of Gandhiji was still there and if they accepted Ministerships that spirit would fade.

Mr. Thakurprasad Saxena moved another amendment stating that the decision on the office acceptance question be taken not by the A. I. C. C. but by an open session. He said that he wanted to preserve the right of delegates to decide such momentous questions.

The President announced that Mr. S. M. Joshi had another amendment identical with that of Mr. Saxena.

Mr. Satyamurthi, in an effective speech, supported the original resolution and opposed all amendments. He expressed delight at the fact that Pandit Malaviya who was opposed to the resolution at Lucknow, had seconded it now. Mr. Satyamurthi maintained that it was a practical, wise and statesmanlike decision which should appeal to those who see far ahead. After accepting the election manifesto, which rejected the constitution, no legislator would co-operate with the India Act. "Give us a chance to demonstrate at the proper time in the proper manner before the proper authority to reject and wreck the Act," he declared. I conceive of three possible ways of wrecking the Act, (1) by not obeying the laws of the legislature. Does anyone advocate this method? (2) To boycott elections. Does anyone advocate it? (3) To prevent the Act functioning. To prevent reactionary elements and communalists working it for their own benefit and to the detriment of the country's interests.

"We must enter legislatures, capture positions of vantage and create deadlocks and bring about crises. I conceive when we have disciplined honourable, patriotic and compact ministers, amenable to Congress discipline and willing to obey the orders of the Congress, there is no fear of their going astray. When office is offered to the Congress, we will lay down conditions are accepted and if all our premises are fulfilled, Ministerships will be accepted and we will force the Governor to accept our demands. The only alternative for the Governor is to suspend the constitution. What will happen then? There is Mahatma Gandhi and we are here and we know what to do. I see no other way of wrecking the Act. A mere verbal statement, 'I want to wreck the Act' will not do. I challenge the sponsors of the amendment to show another way of wrecking the Act. Life is larger than logic. Are we going to judge everything with the yardstick of logic? The election manifesto says that this question will be decided immediately

after the elections. Why should we go back, upon it? Nothing has happened to compel us to go back.

"It is argued that once you reject the constitution, you should not accept office. Take the case of de Valera. I cannot think of a better way of wrecking the Act than mine. Sardar Sardul Singh's argument about bringing to an end the normal working of the constitution is hollow. We want to terminate effectively and speedily the entire constitution and destroy the sham. Sardar Sardul Singh says that under no circumstance we shall accept office. Is it logic, theory, Vedanta, sub-sutra or Koranic indictment or a Christmas precept? 'Are we not politicians?' It is more the obsession of Sardar Sardul Singh that Swaraj is of less importance than non-acceptance of offices. I know what havoc had been caused by the current communal anti-democratic party of zemindars and landlords in Madras. It is not because we are anxious for Ministerships that we want to accept offices, but because we want to prevent such reactionaries who are tools in the hands of the bureaucracy from killing our spirit. "As regards the argument born of suspicion of Congressmen who enter legislatures, it is beneath contempt. I take no notice of it. It shows inferiority complex. There may be black sheep. The arm of the Congress is long enough to haul them up."

In conclusion, Mr. *Satyamurti* said, "We are determined to bury the Act and build on its ashes the edifice of a new India."

Mr. *S. M. Joshi*, supporting Sardar Sardul Singh's amendment, declared that if the Non-Brahmin party in Bombay had lost whatever influence it had, it was after accepting offices.

Mr. *Amar Singh Saigal*, opposing Sardar Sardul Singh's amendment, reminded the audience of the Congress resolution regarding salary limits and said, "Let not people be under the delusion that by accepting offices they could get his salaries."

Mr. *Shankar Rao Deo* supported the resolution which he said was calculated to have far-reaching influence. Because the Congress failed to get independence in 1930, there appeared to be the impression that the fight for independence could never be given up. It would be carried on by Congressmen even in Councils. There could not be any question of co-operation with the Government, whom they had been fighting.

Closure was applied and Babu *Rajendra Prasad*, replying to the debate, said that Mr. Dange had showed a method but he was not sure that its application to India would be possible. Nor did he know when that method could be applied in India. The present decision regarding office was not a sign of indecisiveness. Under certain conditions, not to take a decision was the wisest decision. If we showed up our differences on this question now, no one would be happier than our enemies.

Mr. Dange's amendment was put to vote and declared lost by a majority.

Sardar Sardul Singh's amendment was lost by 451 votes to 263 votes.

Mr. *Saxena's* amendment was also lost and the original resolution was carried amidst cheers.

The resolution on calling of a convention immediately after the provincial elections was put from the chair and passed unanimously.

### Agrarian Problem

Mr. *Gadgil* moved the resolution on the agrarian problem and Mr. Bhalabhai Desai seconded it.

The President told the House that he would have liked to have a full dress debate on the resolution, but there was no time. The resolution was passed.

### Voting for Congress

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel moved the resolution appealing to the electorate to vote for the Congress candidates. He said that as a result of the Congress campaign more people had been enfranchised in India now than at any time since British rule was established. He declared that only those who loved slavery would vote for others than Congressmen. "The decision whether you shall be free or in bondage is for you to take. The Congress had to fight wealthy people who were helped by officials. Not that the Congress was afraid of the money that these non-Congressmen had. What we should be afraid of is our own weakness." The Faizpur Congress had shown how much the common people love the Congress. Civil disobedience brought out the best from the people. He asked those who had not been selected as Congress candidates to the legislatures not to be dissatisfied, for there was bigger work outside the Councils. He had toured India from the Frontier to Cape Comorin and had selected the candidates. Except in the case of five or six seats, no dissatisfaction had been expressed.

"If we are for independence we can only vote for the Congress", concluded Sardar Patel. "There is neither fear nor shame in it. If Congressmen failed in the elections the Government would tell the world that our claim for independence is a sham. If three crores of voters are reached by the Congress, there can be nothing more conducive to mass contact." He appealed to those, who had votes, to give it to the Congress. The Maharashtra had proved its strength by making a success of the Faizpur session. Let the country prove its strength by voting for the Congress.

Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande, seconding the resolution, said that it was for those who opposed the Congress to prove how to help India by working the constitution. The Congress should create an atmosphere on the first of April for wrecking the Act. What all should concentrate upon was to wreck the constitution, which perpetuated slavery. The Congress was an organisation which from Dadabhoi Naoroji to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had been built up by sacrifices. It should be unnecessary for the Congress to ask for the votes of electors. As regards the charge of irreligion against the Congress, could they show better hands than Pandit Malaviya? Even when a Congress Government came, it would not interfere with religion. The Congress had only one enemy and that was the man who kept India under foreign domination.

Mr. K. M. Jedhe supported the resolution which was passed.

#### Other Resolutions

The resolutions on Hartal on April 1, 1937, and the Coronation were put from the Chair and passed.

The invitation from Gujarat to hold the next session there was accepted.

Babu Rajendra Prasad, in a speech thanking the Reception Committee on behalf of the Working Committee, began reminding them how ten months ago Mr. Nehru came back and took up the Presidentship of the Congress with enthusiasm. They were looking forward to the day when he would be not only the President of the Congress, but of the whole country. The speaker congratulated Mr. Shankarrao Deo and Mr. Dawrane and their associates on the success of the session. The Maharashtra had set before them a great example of discipline and organisation.

Mr. M. S. Aney hoped that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would be the first President of the Indian Republic.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru associated himself with the tributes paid to Mr. Shankarrao Deo and others of the Reception Committee. Someone had remarked that he (Mr. Nehru) was the spoilt child of the Congress. It was a correct statement. How could he help being spoilt when they all made every effort to spoil him.

Mr. Nehru proceeded to point out that the greatness of great leaders was the result of the support that the people united to give them. He was pleased with the discipline and order with which so many thousands had conducted themselves at the session. If they could utilise this discipline and order and work for Swaraj, what a great thing it would be?

Mr. Shankarrao Deo thanked all organisers and workers and particularly those who first refused to give the land for holding the session. "Vande Mataram" was sung next and the session concluded amidst enthusiastic scenes.

# The Flag Salutation Ceremony

Scenes of tense drama marked the Flag Salutation ceremony held at the Tilak Nagar, Faizpur on the morning of the 27th. December 1936, before the Congress Session commenced.

The torch which had been brought by relay from Bombay and the flag were handed to Mr. Nehru who stood on the platform at the foot of the flag staff, a trim straight figure easily distinguishable among other leaders grouped about him. "Vande Mataram" was sung and the flag was hoisted amidst cheers, which had hardly died down when the crowd in one corner got out of hand. A man fainted and he was brought near the flagstaff. Here, there was an immediate rush to see what had happened.

Mr. Nehru imperiously descended from the platform and ordered back the crowd. Those within hearing immediately obeyed but the vaster crowds all round the enclosure were unmanageable. Volunteers rushed about frantically trying to restore order. Mr. Nehru was in the thick of it, apparently angry at the sight of some volunteers using sticks to keep back the pressing crowds.

Mr. Nehru got back to the platform and cast his eyes round apparently to see if there was sufficient order among the crowd for him to make a speech. But there was no indication that the crowd would settle down to hear him. He, therefore, passed out of the enclosure accompanied by other leaders to the intense disappointment of the concourse.

## M. Gandhi's Speech at the Exhibition

Crowds, which came to hear Mr. Nehru and were going away disappointed, were rewarded by a glimpse of Mr. Gandhi as he went into the exhibition grounds and at least 10,000 of them gathered inside to hear him make one of his most powerful speeches of recent years. Mr. Gandhi at the outset said that the reason for holding a meeting inside the exhibition grounds was in order to enable them to look round the exhibits. "If to-day, we have gained strength to hold the Congress session in a village, we must have increased strength in coming years. The rush in Tilak Nagar is so great that the Reception Committee is requesting people to return to their homes, as it is impossible to meet the requirements of the vast influx of people. They hope, with God's grace, to manage, in the coming two or three days."

Speaking of the birth and growth of the Khadi movement in India, Mr. Gandhi said that it had slowly developed during the past twenty years. "I had said through spinning you could win Swaraj. People thought that it was sheer madness to say so. After the experience of these 20 years, I realise and the country would have realised that it was not madness. We have declared that no outside power can rule us and that we must be our own Government. All of us should be happy. None should starve. Getting a piece of bread alone is not happiness. Happiness involves getting all things necessary for living comfortably. After independence, our men and women should be beautifully clothed. You will be surprised to see from the exhibition how in the olden days Khadi was prepared and worn."

"We must improve our economic conditions, side by side with improving our political conditions. India should have a home-made constitution and not a constitution imposed from the outside. The various countries in the world have their own systems of government. Whom shall we follow? Our political setting should be Indian. We don't want a model of the British Parliament or Russia or Portugal or Germany or Italy. I cannot speak of Spain, for it is in the throes of a struggle."

"My conception of freedom is essentially Indian. If you ask how we will run our Government, I cannot tell you here and now, although at the Round Table Conference I said I can give an Indian constitution to-day. Then I had the Congress constitution in mind, a constitution in the development and growth of which I had a hand. Under my Swaraj, even foreigners can live if only they respect our flag. My independence is for all."

"I tell my Socialist friends 'You are not talking anything now'. Our ancestors always said this is God's earth. It is neither of the capitalists nor of zamindars nor of anybody. It belongs to God (Jee) who reared cows. It is his, who is a



cowherd. Neither Raja nor Zamindar can say it is his. Eventually, even our body is not our own. The only thing eternal is the soul.

"Apart from politics and economics, there are two other things which we should attend to—social and moral questions. We should perfect them also. We have to develop them in this country and not follow others. Our approach to this question must be legitimate and non-violent. When you say you believe in God, something religious comes into it. Even if everything goes and the world is destroyed, one thing will remain. That is Truth.

"In the Dharma of my conception, there is no place for quarrel between Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs and Mussalmans. I am talking about Dharma, which is above all this and without which nothing is possible. It is our duty to believe in that Power which shapes our destinies without which nothing can move. According to me, if we perfect this, we will get Swaraj. Poorna Swaraj and Ramraj."

Referring to Congress Parliamentary activities, Mr. Gandhi said, "For the parliamentary programme only a few are required. Only a few hundred need attend to it. Those going to the legislatures are our servants. It is our duty to give them an order. The most that we can do for them is to cast our votes in their favour, since they are Congressmen. I do not know how many of you have votes, but I may tell you that I have no vote. The Government will ask me if I was sentenced to six years. I will say 'yes' and they will not include me in the voters' list!

I would like to know whether you would like me to join the three and a half crores or voters or the remaining thirty-one and a half crores of people without the vote?"

Here Mahatma Gandhi paused for an answer to his question and the answer came from many around him, "We want you for the thirty-one and a half crores."

"You know better how many of the three and a half crores can get into the legislatures," said Mr. Gandhi. "Only a few hundred. Everyone seems to be anxious to go. There seems to be a regular competition as to who should go there. I have heard that there are disputes in certain provinces. I have been told of dissatisfaction among many Congressmen regarding the parliamentary programme. What is there to quarrel about? I do not see anything in it. Those who enter the legislatures in the name of the Congress will have to carry out the directions given by the Congress. Otherwise they will have to leave the Congress. I assure you that I still hold that nothing can be got from the legislatures."

"The only good part of parliamentary work is that you can demonstrate that the Congress is no party to the ordinance rule. One thing will not happen easily. No one will order Jawaharlal Nehru to be hanged because he delivered a stirring speech at Lucknow. It may still happen, but it will not happen with our own signatures. It may be moved that Subhas Bose should be set free. It may or may not be possible, but Congressmen will try to achieve that—to get Subhas at least released. We will stop the boast that Indians are associated with arrests or floggings and the despatch of prisoners to the Andamans will be stopped."

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said, "There is ordinance rule in India to-day and similarly there is ordinance rule inside the Congress. Those who are in the Congress and follow the Congress and work in the name of the Congress will have to implicitly carry out the directions given by the Congress. What did Jawaharlal do at Lucknow? He carried out the orders of the Congress. I know that Jawaharlal would not only enter jails again, but also mount the scaffold with a smile on his face, if that was the command of the Congress to him. I am very confident of that. What can you get by entering legislatures? Subhas Chandra Bose, I hear, is standing as a candidate. If all vote for him, it is possible he may be released from detention but I cannot vouchsafe for it.

"We have lost our freedom step by step. It began with our giving up spinning. I do not blame the Britisher for it. We gave up spinning and began importing cloth from Lancashire, where not a single piece of yarn was being produced before. I maintain that we can get our freedom through spinning. Is there anyone who can show another way consistent with our principles of Non-violence and Truth by which we can win back our freedom? If I am convinced that the method shown is consistent with the principles of Truth and Non-violence, I am to-day prepared to publicly state that. I was a mad man and I shall leave off spinning and I will no longer lay any stress on it and I shall become a slave to the person who shows me the method. But so far no one has come forward with any new method. We have lost independence through giving up spinning and we shall win it back through spinning."

"If we have lost our freedom, the responsibility for it is more ours than the Britishers. Since the East India Company landed in India, unemployment has consistently grown and we have become so lethargic that many think that it is our right to be unemployed. If we stick to the principles of Truth and Non-violence, the only way in which the unemployed can earn their living is by spinning and not by selling toddy or opium. I am confident that if every Indian realises the importance of spinning and khadi, then Swaraj will be at our door and there will no longer be any need for parliamentary programme."

Mr. Gandhi then referred to the relations between Hindus and Mussalmans and deplored the recent happenings in Bombay. He said, "What is it that you have been seeing about the relationship between the two? Go to Bombay and you will see the Sultan Raj there. I gave a programme for Hindu-Muslim unity. Has it been achieved in full? I gave you a programme for the removal of Untouchability. I wanted Caste-Hindus to remove from their brains the very idea of Untouchability. Have they done it? Of course, recently the young Ruler of Travancore had lifted the ban on Harijans. It was, certainly, praiseworthy, but what about Caste-Hindus all over the country? I had asked students to leave schools and colleges and asked lawyers to leave law courts and legislators the Councils. Have you carried out these? I gave you in simple language a dynamic programme. I am asked why I, who was always opposed to the Council-entry programme, blessed it in 1934 both at Ranohi and Patna. I am a realist. I thought as a realist that it was necessary for me to bless the Council-entry programme then."

Mr. Gandhi explaining the importance of the Charka said that it was like the sun of the solar system and the village industries were planets.

Warming up, Mr. Gandhi said, "It is not a big thing for 35 crores of people to throw a stone each and finish the few lakhs of Britishers in this country. What sort of a freedom would that be? What will God say if we win our freedom that way? He will certainly not like it. We are Satyagrahis and we will not do anything of that sort."

"Many might be doubtful about my strength and capacity. They possibly think, 'What has this old man got? Let me assure you I am filled with the same strength and energy that I had years ago. Is there any issue on which I can go to jail? Show that and I will go. I am even prepared to mount the scaffold, if there is an occasion. I feel the same about Jawaharlal. I can assure you that I feel confident that Jawaharlal would mount the scaffold, if India's freedom needed it. Where is then the necessity for us to go to Lord Linlithgow and the British Parliament? They will come to us."

"During my stay at Sheogaon I have been visualising the state when Lord Linlithgow will come to the Congress and declare that he was sorry for the wrong impression he had about the Congress and Congressmen. He would say, 'I am sorry for the wrong impression we formed of you. We thought that you were terrorists and violent people, but we have now realised that you are really non-violent'. Lord Linlithgow will then ask us whether he and his men could stay in India or whether we want them to leave by the next boat. We will say, 'There is no need for you people to go. India is a vast country. You and your people can stay comfortably, provided you accommodate yourself to our conditions here. We do not want any immigration laws.'

"I am not saying this sitting in a drawing room. I am declaring it in an open meeting where there are press representatives, who will convey it to the proper quarters."

Concluding Mr. Gandhi said, "I do not know whether I will be able to meet you and address you next year. Not that I am on a death-bed but I am nearer death than many of you and one cannot say what will happen during the next year."

# The National Liberal Federation

18th. Session—Lucknow—29th. & 31st. December 1936

## The Welcome Address

The 18th. session of the National Liberal Federation met at Lucknow on the 29th. December 1936 in the beautifully decorated Ganapat Memorial Hall under the presidency of Sir Cowasji Jahangir.

After the singing of "Bandemataran" and prayer, the Reception Committee Chairman, *Raja Sir Rampal Singh*, being absent owing to indisposition, his welcome address was read by Mr. S. P. Andrews Dabey, on being called upon to do so by the acting Chairman, Thakur Hanuman Singh. The following is the text of the address:—

It was twelve years ago that a session of the Federation was held in this city under the presidency of our distinguished countryman and now my friend and fellow-citizen, Dr. Paranjpye, of the same province from which our President elect hails. Several faces familiar to us at that session we now sadly miss. In the present temper of this country and world as a whole, same middle opinion represented by Liberalism is unfortunately at a discount. Broadly speaking, the upper ten and the lower million are arrayed in mutual conflict in the sorried ranks of fascism and communism. Democratic countries headed by England are a fortunate exception. In our own land the poverty of the masses and the discontent of the classes have conspired to make the new Congress—I advisedly say "new" as I see in it no lineaments of the Congress with which we were familiar—with its slogans of separation from England, direct action and socialism, more popular than is good for the ordered progress of the country. And we find this answered by the regrettable tendency of a section of the propertied classes to rally round the banner of the bureaucratic government and act as its subsidiary allies. The result is that our organisation is not as large and does not make as stirring a popular appeal as we could all wish it did. Still, I am glad that our party is by no means stagnant. It would not be Liberal if it was. Slowly, if rather slowly, the class to which I belong has been realising the unwisdom of remaining isolated or merely hanging on to the coat-tails of the Government and is gradually coming forward to take its place in public organisations and among public workers, with the result that to this session of the Federation at Lucknow a noteworthy contribution has been made by taluqdars and other landlords. Presently I shall have more to say on this point.

I will not detain you with criticism of the new constitution that is partly going to come into force in April next. That task has been done more than once and by more Liberals than one with great ability and at considerable length. At this stage it is of no advantage for us to point out the defects and objectionable features of the new constitution. They are many as well as serious. But we have to recognize the logic of accomplished facts and proceed now to consider what our public duty requires at the present stage. Elections to the first provincial legislative assemblies and councils under the new constitution are in progress. Every party in the country is taking keen interest in them. No longer is there any wild talk of boycott of the legislatures. For the time being at any rate, non-co-operation has become a memory of the past. The monopolists of patriotism are engaged at the present moment not in hatching schemes of triple boycott or mass civil disobedience but in trying to get into the legislatures in numbers as large as possible. They continue to mutter the accents of wreckers, and it may be that if they had the power they would proceed to put their threats into execution. But, fellow-Liberals, every student of the new Government of India Act knows very well or ought to know that it is proof against tactics of wrecking. I assume that this tall talk of wrecking followed by visionary constituent assembly, is merely intended to mislead the unfortunately unconstructed electorate into the fond belief that Congressmen are a species of humanity different from the rest of us and they have some occult means of achieving the impossible. The strong probability is, as has been abundantly

demonstrated by our experience of the activities of Congress members in various legislative bodies during the last thirteen years, that once they are there they will be very much like other nationalist members, save for noise and bombast, and also periodical staging of walks-out; that once the elections are over they are likely to seek the co-operation of persons and parties now ostentatiously condemned and that they will be interested in exploring the possibilities more of office than of destruction. I am frightened less by their election talk than by the foundations they are laying of a class war which will ruin both the classes and the masses and may only be of advantage to a third party. I was among those who had hoped that in the presence of a grave national crisis wiser counsels would prevail with Congressmen and they would make common cause with all other nationalists in the country in order to minimize harm and to extract the maximum good that even an unsatisfactory constitution could be made to yield in favourable circumstances. I have been disappointed. This being so I had hoped that all non-Congress sections of society would realise the necessity of averting public mischief in the way of socialistic programmes, ill-considered and undigested, the one certain effect of which will be still further to accentuate divisions among a people already more than sufficiently disunited. Here, too, I must confess to a sad sense of disappointment. Instead of non-Congressmen seeking means of unity among themselves, a section of them, at least in these provinces, has been casting wistful glances at the authority which bestows patronage, and has formed a new organization which is encouraged by Government but eyed with distrust by the majority of independent-minded men.

It is my deliberate conviction that the Liberal Party is the only party which may be joined by the land-lords if they wish that they should play their part in the politics of the country. The Liberal Party stands for the legitimate rights of all. It strives to give full scope to every interest, every class and every community to pursue the path of orderly progress and advancement equally in matters social, economic and political, always keeping in view the advancement of the political freedom of the Motherland. A political party which has such principles cannot do any harm to any section of our countrymen. Those landlords who think that the Liberal Party is opposed to their legitimate interests are wrong. It is a party whose portals are ever open to landlords, tenants, industrialists and persons of all professions and of every stratum of society. By joining it people can settle their differences and bring about union amongst the different classes for the achievement of the common goal. Legitimate rights in land should be shared by landlords and tenants alike. Without this the peaceful progress of neither will be possible. The best advantage that the landlords can derive from being members of the Liberal Party is that they will come in close contact with the best brains of the country and the intelligentsia in general. This will have the effect of liberalizing their parochial views and widening their political horizon and it will turn their thoughts to higher ideals instead of limiting them to their petty self-interest.

I am surprised that the Government looks askance at the Liberal Party which has the most honest intentions to serve the country and in no true sense unfriendly to it. It seeks to reform and not to subvert or overthrow it. Its attitude is always discriminating. When it criticises Government policies and measures, it does so in the spirit of the physician who gives unpleasant medicines to heal and not to kill. But if the Congress is perverse at one end, the Government is blind at the other. It favours parties created and in existence chiefly to flatter the Government and bask in the sunshine of its favour. These, it thinks, are its real well-wishers. Yet at least some members of such parties have been and are known to keep on terms with Congress—of course taking care all the while that their official patrons are kept ignorant of their secret doing—the moment it was thought to be going strong. I can not understand the Government's attitude as it is a body of highly intelligent and instructed men, except by reference to their love of flattery and a selfish desire to continue to be our master as the real ruling authority behind a facade of apparently constitutional devices. This is against all of their own professions. I have two things to say of this. The first is that we will not have it. We will not tolerate any more of domination. The second is that it is opposed to the best interests of the British connection with India. In a long view such an attitude is tantamount to Empire-wrecking. The Liberal Party wants political regeneration by constitutional means unlike the Congress which is desirous of creating a revolution and upsetting the whole fabric of society and government. The policy of the Congress if carried out cannot but be disastrous to the Motherland. It can only bring chaos out of which it will be very difficult to evolve an orderly government.

### The Presidential Address

After the welcome speech, *Sir Cowasjee Jahangir* delivered his presidential Address. At the outset *Sir Cowasjee* gave a brief survey of the developments of political thought and action during the latter part of the British connection in India and the contribution of the Liberals in India's national awakening. He next reviewed the two Civil Disobedience Movements launched by the Congress with their "disastrous" results. He then said :—

"Once the Congress decided to accept office, the differences between the two schools of progressive thought will tend to be between ideals, and will tend to disappear with regard to immediate and practical politics. There can be no difference in our desire to see that such vast problems as unemployment are solved, and that better conditions with regard to sanitation and medical relief are available for all our peoples, whether they are industrial workers or agriculturists. While strongly opposed to communistic principles, we would, by all means in our power, support the kind and character of socialism adopted in England within the last fifty years."

"We have been characterised as cowards and men and women are afraid to undergo the hardships and suffering which fell to the lot of Congressmen engaged in direct action. We have always repudiated these base allegations and insinuations. We have always been of the opinion that those methods retarded the political progress of India, and we are still of this belief. Within a short time, there arose differences of opinion amongst Congressmen in connection with the question of Council-entry, and the beginning of 1924 saw Congressmen in the Assembly and in the Councils under the banner of the Swaraj Party, and to this day they form the Opposition in the Assembly."

"We have always stood for Dominion Status as a practical and feasible goal of our ambition. The Congress raised the banner of independence which the orthodox Congressmen refused to acknowledge. The Congress adopted direct methods of action which they have now suspended, while we continue to believe in constitutional methods of agitation, as expounded and followed by the founders of the Congress."

"But now, unfortunately, the differences between us are widening. We have, from the very beginning, advocated a policy of getting into the legislatures and taking office. We consider boycott of the legislatures most detrimental to the interests of our country. The Congress started boycotting the Legislatures in 1919, and have since changed their minds on more than one occasion. To-day, most unfortunately for the country, they have not decided upon any settled policy. They have decided upon capturing the Legislatures at the next elections, but they hesitate to commit themselves on the principle of taking office. There can be no doubt about the serious differences of opinion that exist among themselves. Although this may be no business of ours, it affects us every vitality, being just before the general elections. All candidates are not committed one way or the other. This is most unfair to the electorate. Such a state of affairs would not be tolerated in any country where the electorate was trained to a sense of responsibility. It is felt that, taking advantage of a first election on a much wider franchise, the most important political party in the country, confident of its popularity, treats the electorate with contempt. Unable to come to a decision on a vital issue, due to differences amongst themselves, they postpone decision until after the elections. Thus those of the electorate who are definitely against the acceptance of office can vote for the Congress candidate, hoping that the Party will decide for non-acceptance, while Congressmen in favour of acceptance can also vote for the same candidate, hoping that their point of view will finally prevail. This is surely a unique form of democracy! In short, they state: "Vote for us, as the most important political party in the country, but we will decide what we shall do,—it is no business of yours!"

We treat the electorate with much greater respect. We lay our cards on the table, we clearly state that we are strongly of opinion that the party with the majority in the Legislatures should take office, and we fervently hope that better counsels will prevail, with the result there will be found in every legislature in India good men and true, willing to shoulder responsibilities and discharge their duty in the best interests of their country. Our advocacy of the acceptance of office does not, by any means, imply our satisfaction with the Government of India Act of 1935. It has even been said that the Liberals were the strongest critics of the future constitution. We have, year in and year out, drawn attention to its shortcomings, and I may, therefore, be permitted to point out in a few words some of our main objections which have met with no redress.

"I am perfectly aware of the criticism of those of our countrymen who are against acceptance of office. They doubt the utility of becoming Ministers when the most important Government servants are recruited by another authority and will constantly look to that other authority for redress against supposed grievances. This, it is said, must lead to defiance, lack of authority and a failure to effectively carry out policies that may be decided by Ministers. I admit that, in theory, these objections are valid and that to some may even appear insurmountable. But I have already once publicly said that I personally believe that these very officers, when put to the test, will be found prepared to carry out, loyally and conscientiously, the policies of the Governments of the Provinces. It will be for the Ministers to exact discipline and loyalty; but if experience shows that, even after making reasonable demands, such as would be made by Ministers in any country under a democratic form of Government, Government servants do not respond, although dismissal may not be possible, the remedy for the Minister is his own resignation. Such exposures, if unhappily they are necessary, will much more quickly tend to an amendment of the Act than non-acceptance of office."

Referring to what they would do or what they would expect others to do who are returned to the legislatures he said: "First and foremost, we would make strenuous attempts to secure an early revision of the new Constitution with a view to attainment of Dominion Status at the earliest possible date. We would insist upon the resignation of Ministers, if the safeguards of Reserved Powers are exercised unreasonably or arbitrarily for interference with the responsibility of Ministers, or if the Governor-General or Governors act against the spirit of the Constitution."

"We would encourage, by every means in our power, the Swadeshi movement, and would see to it that our people supported national enterprises in the fields of banking, insurance and shipping and assist in the manufacture of goods most suitable to our climatic conditions, and make our country, so far as it is possible, self-sufficient. We would give every support, as we have always done, to the removal of untouchability. This question has for years formed a prominent plank of our platform, and we can point to the efforts of several members of our party who devote their lives to social work. While respecting the feelings of some of the orthodox sections in India, we trust that within a very few years, there will be none in this country who will continue to deprive a large section of their countrymen of the common rights of citizenship and condemn them to a social order carrying with it degrading social conditions and a stigma of inferiority. We would also support legislation having for its object the improvement of the condition of the agriculturists."

Sir *Cawasji* next referred to the Congress President's views and said: "I have already stated that our differences with the Congress have been widened, since they are unable to decide on the all-important question of acceptance of office. But our differences with a certain section of the Congress led by its President are much more fundamental. I had occasion some months ago to strongly criticise the school of thought to which he belongs. 'Agitation under' pretence of reform, with a view to overturn revealed truth and order, is the worst kind of mischief.' Since then, the Congress Manifesto, seeking support for the Congress candidates at the next General Elections for the Provincial Legislatures, has seen the light of day. It appears to me to be an illogical compromise between two divergent schools of thought. One would refuse to enter the Legislatures, because they see no hope of a communistic system of Government for this country developing through a constitution based on democratic principles. They would have no connection with the British Commonwealth of Nations, not because the country cannot attain a standard of Government, as free, as independent, as capable of serving the best interests of the country as any Government in the world, but because there are none or very few chances of the country obtaining a system of Government which Russia once thought would work with success. Herein lies the reason for a certain section of the Congress refusing to accept office."

Dealing with the question of Indians overseas, the President said: "On no question of national importance does one observe such a marked unanimity of opinion among all shades of political thought in India as on this question,—a question which has been associated in the minds of us all with mixed feelings of resentment and concern at the systematic disregard of our brethren abroad. Whether it is South Africa or Kenya; Zanzibar or Fiji; Tanganyika or Malay, there is the same tale of deliberate inroads on their economic privileges, and of an enhancement of their political and economic disabilities."

"The general desire on the part of the white settler to discriminate racially by a series of legislation of economic nature, ostensibly intended to benefit the natives

whose interests are supposed to be paramount, but invariably aimed at squeezing Indians out of their lawful pursuits in those farflung parts of the British Commonwealth, is being intensified day by day. To these sore spots of the British Empire, two more are now likely to be added, Ceylon and Burma. Within the brief space of this address, I can only deal with the most salient features of these problems, and if I do not mention grievances of Indians in other parts of the world, it may not be presumed that they do not exist. The history of Indians in South Africa is a history of an anti-Indian, discriminatory legislation to which there seems no end. The principles of presidential and commercial segregation, of which the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of the Union of South Africa is but one example, continues to prevail with the same persistence. The Union Slump Act is another example. Differential treatment in matters of trading licenses is meted out to Indians in Natal and the Transvaal. Acquisition of immovable property in the Transvaal by Indians is forbidden except in certain unfavourable locations, and they are subjected to the rigorous provisions of the Gold Law. Even now efforts are made by those opposed to Indian aspirations further to restrict the economic and social privileges of Indians. One sees no hope in the near future of seeing our brethren in this part of the Empire relieved of the disabilities which the ingenuity of the white settler has, during the last two decades and more, imposed on them in the shape of legislative and administrative discrimination.

"We, however, welcome the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Amendment Act (1936) giving Indians some rights of ownership in certain mining areas. The redeeming feature of this situation was the recent good-will delegation to India who have carried with them happy memories of their sojourn here. We trust the resulting sympathy will help them to plead for the removal of the apparent disabilities of anti-Indian legislation which has neither the sanctity of equity, nor the basis of logic and not even the saving grace of honest concern for the native interest.

"Kenya Colony is another big problem. I need not go into the full details of disputes on all issues relating to franchise, segregation, grants and transfers in the Highlands or the control of immigration. But I desire to draw your attention to the legislation passed by the Kenya Government in the teeth of opposition from the Kenya Indian community which ostensibly seeks to improve the quality of stable commodities of the Colony and regulate the payment in cash to the native producer. This commercial discrimination against Indians in a new guise. The real object is to restrict trading activities by a licensing and marketing system, so that transactions in specified commodities could be entered into only by licensed dealers, and that too at appointed places only. There is absolute discretion vested in the officials as to the grant of licenses, and an Indian injured by a refusal of license has no right of redress.

"Coming to Zanzibar, you are all aware how the six anti-Indian decrees of June 1934, rushed through the legislature of the Zanzibar Protectorate within fourteen days, had drastically affected the fortunes of 14,600 Indians dependent on the clove trade. Briefly, the effect of that discriminatory legislation is to oust Indians from the clove trade by the imposition of a heavy license fee ranging from Rs. 2,000 upwards by creating the Clove Growers' Association by regulating clove exports, and thus monopolising the clove trade in the hands of a few fortunate Europeans. Added to this is the prohibition of land alienation. So far the relations of the Arab cultivators and Indian traders were friendly. The legislation was undertaken with the ostensible object of preventing transfer of land from the Arab cultivator to the Indian non-agriculturist. The Bartlett-Last Report on which the decrees have been based declared that the alienation was so alarming that agricultural interests of the Protectorate would be affected. It is interesting to note that a commission with an official majority, presided over by the Chief Justice has since then held that there is no foundation for that finding. There has also been a moratorium in force for two years, preventing Indians from foreclosing. The situation now is that the Binder Inquiry has been instituted to examine the effect of this legislation on Indians.

"With regard to the Fiji Islands, which have an Indian population of 79,000, we find the same story repeated in a different form. In 1920, by Letters Patent, the Fiji Legislative Council was established. Three Indian members demanded a common electoral roll, and resigned when the request was not conceded. In 1932, there was a fresh election when two Indians entered the Council but resigned on the same issue. Now under the new Constitution, the Fiji Council will be composed of 31 members, in which there will be an official block of 16, the remaining 15 non-official seats being divided equally between Indian, Fijians and Europeans. The Fijian

population is about 60,000 and European number only 4,000. With the official block siding with the Europeans, Indians in Fiji have a poor chance of having their grievances redressed. There is also no security of land tenure, as the Indian agriculturist here cannot hold land permanently, but has to enter into a 25-year lease. This means trouble at every renewal, especially if the Indian farmer has spent money in land improvement.

"Coming nearer home, one finds the question of Indians in Ceylon fast becoming a complicated issue. The Government of India have their Agent in Ceylon. The main dispute centres round the question of fixing a standard of minimum wage for Indian Estate labourers, and with it, closely associated, is the problem of immigration, as it affects the standard of living which is now being examined by the Immigration Commission. Though in 1927, by the enactment of the Indian Labour Ordinance, minimum wages were fixed in 1931 the same were reduced, further decline in prices has precipitated the issue in view of further likely reductions. However, the extremist element in Ceylon has adopted a hostile attitude and would like to see a check placed on Indian immigration of labour.

"I may here briefly refer to Malay which has a population of 6,24,000 Indians and where the trouble is much the same. Indian labourers employed on rubber estates and elsewhere are subjected to a standard Wage Rate agreed upon by the Government of India and the Malay Government. These rates were reduced by 20 per cent in 1920 in view of the acute economic crisis with which the rubber trade was faced. This question is now occupying the attention of the authorities, and we hope the ultimate solution will pave way for lasting settlement and economic peace. One of our most distinguished Liberals, the Right Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri is at present visiting that country to investigate the problems and I am sure you would like me to wish him on your behalf and my own, every success in his mission.

## Proceedings and Resolutions

### Second Day—Lucknow—31st. December 1936

A large number of peasants and members of the Depressed Classes were present at to-day's meeting of the Federation.

After seven hours' continuous sitting, the Federation concluded its session late in the evening, passing 14 resolutions unanimously and deciding to hold the next session in Calcutta during the Christmas week of 1937.

While considerable discussion marked the proceedings of the meeting of the Subjects Committee yesterday, wherein draft resolutions underwent a change, the proceedings of to-day's open session went on smoothly, all resolutions being passed without a single dissentient voice.

After passing resolutions moved from the chair, condoling the death of King George V, regretting the abdication of King Edward VIII, offering homage to His Majesty King George VI and regretting the Liberal Party's losses, the Federation took up the resolution dealing with the new constitution.

#### The New Constitution

The resolution reiterated the Federation's considered opinion that the constitution embodied in the Government of India Act 1935 was extremely unsatisfactory and altogether unacceptable. It was not merely utterly inadequate but retrograde in many respects and included features obnoxious to Indian national opinion. Nevertheless, it had to be utilised to the best advantage of the people for the amelioration of their social and economic condition and accelerating the pace of further constitutional advance to the dominion status. The resolution expressed the earnest hope that in the elections to the new provincial legislatures, the electors would return National candidates who would neither attempt the impossible nor be subservient to authority nor prefer sectional interests to national, but who would do their best for the well-being and advancement of the people as a whole.

The resolution opined that Governors are Provinces should not further whittle down such meagre concessions as the act had made to the Indian demands but if the Governors used their powers so as to impede political or economic progress of the country, the Ministers should resign their offices.



The resolution further urged that no concession should be made to Princes in the course of negotiations now going on as regards the establishment of the Federation which was calculated to increase still more the powers of Princes at the expense of the Federal Government.

Mr. Venkatarama Sastri, moving the resolution, referred to the omission of Dominion Status as the goal of India's aspirations, in the Act. He said that there were various safeguards in the Act for commercial interests and the services of Britishers which attitude the Liberals had so often criticised.

Referring to the Congress, Mr. Sastri said that a large majority had come to the conclusion that they must go to the Councils. They had kept the office acceptance issue in abeyance till after the elections. The Liberals' attitude was clear for acceptance of offices and the people now opposed to acceptance of offices, were those who carried Socialist propaganda in the country and who were really in a hopeless minority. He was sure that the vast majority on the whole, and in Madras particularly, would vote for office acceptance. The working of Reforms would go on merrily while attempts to wreck them would throw power in the hands of the Government and add to their worries. On the other hand, if the wreckers succeeded in their attempts, they would take centuries to achieve their end. The speaker warned that the Governors of Provinces should not interfere with the work of Ministers and if they unnecessarily did so, Ministers should resign.

Seconding the resolution, Dr. Paranjpye said that it would be the responsibility of Ministers to see that Governors did not thwart their progress, since they would be responsible for any mischief done and consequently they should always carry their resignations in their pockets. But they should have no axe of their own to grind.

The resolution was unanimously passed.

#### Economic Development

Pandit H. N. Kumaru moved a resolution that, in view of the keenly distressing poverty of the mass of people in India and the acute state of unemployment, specially among the educated middle-class, the Federation was convinced of the necessity of bold and far-reaching measures of social and economic amelioration which would recognise the legitimate rights of all classes. Such measures alone would ensure ordered progress and avert anything in the nature of a revolution, disastrous to all. The resolution emphasised the imperative need for the widest diffusion of education, agricultural improvement, industrial development and commercial expansion.

Pandit H. N. Kumaru emphasised the need for developing small indigenous industries. Villagers should be strong to stand on their own feet and that could be attained if they could understand how to cure it. This could be achieved by education. He pleaded the spread of education and strongly deprecated the move to restrict higher education. His party did not believe in making impossible suggestions nor would it make suggestions that would result in class war.

Rai Rajeswar Bali, seconding, assured the house that Zamindars and Talukdars were willing to concede legitimate rights to their tenants. He warned villagers against high sounding promises of a certain party. The resolution was passed.

#### Higher Education

Another resolution adopted by the Federation viewed with concern the tendency manifested in certain quarters to curtail opportunities available to the Indian youth for receiving higher education.

Speaking on the resolution, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad stated that the restriction on higher education were detrimental to British rule. If they wanted to restrict, the result would be that instead of having educated unemployed they would have uneducated unemployed. He pleaded for fostering new industries and those that existed.

#### Army Policy

Mr. P. N. Saprú moved a resolution by which the Federation condemned the continued unresponsiveness of the Government to the repeated demand for nationalisation of the Army in India by rapid increase of the facilities for training of Indians as officers and the gradual, but steady, reduction of the British garrison. The Government's unfavourable attitude was more objectionable as the advance of India to self-government was held up on the plea of the unreadiness of Indians to assume responsibility for the defence of the country—unreadiness for which the

whole responsibility lay on the British Government. The resolution further urged that recruitment to the Army should be thrown open to all provinces and all communities, urged wider expansion of the University Training Corps, strongly objected to the exclusion of Indians from the Auxiliary Force and reaffirmed grave concern at the continued maintenance of military expenditure at a level which was neither just to the Indian tax-payer nor within his capacity to bear and which further accounted for the present very high level of taxation and lack of funds for financing schemes of social reform and economic development.

Mr. P. N. Saprú asked why the Government wanted India to pay for their imperial designs. The larger burden should be borne by England. He pleaded for rapid development of social services in the country.

Seconding, Mr. B. N. Gokhale urged an enquiry into the position in the Frontier Province.

#### Indians Overseas.

The resolution on Indians Overseas (A) appreciated the friendly sentiments towards India expressed by the Parliamentary Delegates from the Union of South Africa, hoping that the Union Government would take speedy and effective steps to establish equal status of the resident Indian community (B) hoped that following separation, the Burma Indian population would be enabled to continue to make its contribution to the stability and prosperity of Burma in collaboration with Burmese citizens, (C) regretted the separation of Aden from India, (D) regretted the evidence of strained relations between India and Ceylon (E) welcomed the appointment by the Government of India of agents in East Africa, Fiji British Guiana, Trinidad and other British territories and (F) drew attention to the position of Indians in Malaya, Fizi, British Guiana and Trinidad, Konya and Zanzibar. The resolution was moved by Mr. N. C. Barucha.

#### Repressive Laws

Mr. P. N. Saprú moved another resolution, relating to repressive legislation and Andamans. It protested against the Criminal Law Amendment Act and several provincial Special Powers Act which continued to be on the statute book and perpetuated or prolonged extraordinary powers. The legitimate liberty of the Press and the public were seriously menaced by these Acts and the Federation urged their immediate repeal. The Federation protested against the arbitrary use of the Sea Customs Act for proscription of books and also against the continued detention of suspected persons without trial, leading to widespread dissatisfaction, and urged the release or judicial trial of the detained persons. The resolution recorded the emphatic protest against the Government's policy in reviving the Andamans as a penal settlement for political offenders, despite the assurances given by the Government of India. The conditions prevailing in that penal settlement caused great hardship and unnecessary suffering to the political prisoners and the Federation urged the necessity for immediate reversal of its present policy in this matter.

Moving the resolution, Mr. P. N. Saprú said, that it was time now that a measure which was thought to be of use 200 years ago was repealed. Detention without trial was a public scandal. No definite charges were made and detenus were afforded no opportunity to clear the charges against them. The Liberal Federation could not remain silent on this matter of interference with their liberties. Keeping political in the Andamans meant making them criminals.

Mr. G. D. Shahane, seconding, said that they were treated as a country under martial law. There was also no reason for press laws being imposed them.

The Federation also adopted a resolution condemning the observance of Untouchability and congratulated the Maharaja of Travancore in throwing open State Temple to all Hindus.

#### Reform of Indian States

Mr. C. Y. Chintamani moved the next resolution relating to the reform of the Indian States, reaffirming complete sympathy to the Federation with legitimate aspirations of the people of the Indian States for civic and political liberties. The resolution deeply regretted that no provision has been made in the new Government of India Act for election of the representatives of States coming to the Federal Legislature for recognition of the peoples' fundamental rights of citizenship. It urged again that the Rulers of States should, without delay, concede to their subjects right of person and property, liberty of speech and press, freedom of association

tion and independent judiciary as well as a representative government, as prelude to responsible government.

The resolution was moved by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, who observed that they were not amongst those who wished Rulers of States or landowners to be wiped out of existence. He said true Swaraj was represented by the States and they should be maintained. Anybody who visited the States would find the difference between them and British India, the latter having a mechanical working. He said that Rulers as constitutional heads would be firmer in their places than as despotic monarchs. He regretted that Rulers of States had worked in subservience to the Political Department of the Government of India. He hoped that wiser Rulers would move with the times. If there was growing discontent amongst the people of a State the Ruler himself has to think for this position. The speaker was aware of Princes in the habit of saying in times of trouble that the bulk of the population was contended but only a few discontented persons were agitating but this had been the shibboleth of despots of all times. This discontent was increasing. The people were demanding more political rights. We, as friends of States, should advise them that they should steadily share political power with their subjects in a responsible Government. If rulers wanted to get on friendly with public men in British India, they should not hesitate to return a certain number of their men in election, even though by indirect election. If they did not concede even this, they would stand self-condemned.

Mr. Chintamani thought that the arrangements regarding Federation were so one-sided that non-representatives of Indian States would be able to nullify the work of representatives of British India. He advised Rulers to open their eyes and listen to Indian leaders and concede the elementary rights of free movement, speech and writing. He reminded Ruling Chiefs that in their hour of need in the past, men of British India had championed their cause as against the British Government.

The Federation also passed a resolution on the necessity for far-reaching measures to be adopted for social and economic amelioration of the country and recognising the distressing poverty of the masses. It also urged the reform of the agrarian laws which would secure the tenantry their legitimate rights, principally fixity of tenure and fair rents, the embodiment of legislative enactment on the main principles of the land revenue assessments in the provinces where it had not been done yet, relief from agricultural indebtedness and adoption of measures to check further fragmentations and facilitate the consolidation of agricultural holdings.

The resolution was passed and the Federation concluded.

## The Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference

### The Welcome Address

The Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference was held at Sholapur on the 18th. July 1936 under the presidency of Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. Mr. M. S. Sirdar, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates to the Conference, said :—

"It has been well said that Liberalism is more an attitude of mind than an article of faith. Our party stands for an all-round progress of society along the lines of liberty, equality and fraternity. It advocates equal opportunity to all without distinction of caste, creed or race. It feels a profound concern for the suppressed, the depressed and the oppressed. It keeps its head severely above the waterline of narrow communalism. Its outlook is always national."

"The re-organisation of the Liberal Party is necessary not only from the natural sense of self-preservation but also from the point of view of the political education that we can give to the masses if we make a concerted effort in that direction. Probably there is no other urgent need in the political field at present than the need to educate the masses politically. Democracy can never be a success unless the masses are sufficiently politically educated. I will not be telling you a new thing if I were to say that the Liberal Party, although it is an old party, with a splendid record and traditions, it has fallen on bad days now-a-days. It is not very well organised; its branches are not functioning very efficiently. Consequently the Liberals who were once upon a time an influential body exercising considerable influence on the actions of the Government have been recently in a decadent position. Other

political parties have been consequently taking undue advantage of this position and have been ceaselessly trying to decri it. It must, however, be admitted that we are ourselves to be blamed for this, because we have failed to set our house in order. We have failed to open branches and offices in smaller towns and villages. We have failed to reach the masses and take them into confidence. Naturally, others who are more vocal and agile, have stolen a march over us. It is high time, therefore, that we should beatir ourselves and take up the work of organising our party immediately. Unless we reach the masses, there is hardly any hope of a prosperous career for our party in the new regime."

After referring to the new Government of India Act, and the Niemeyer Award, Mr. Sirdar said, "Probably one of the most burning topics of the day is the extreme poverty of the masses and the question 'how to cure it'. This problem has been agitating the mind of every individual and every party in the country and the Liberals will be failing in their duty if they do not give serious consideration to it. No authority is necessary to prove the extreme poverty of our country side.

"There can be no mistake that it is these circumstances which have given birth to impatient, radical preachings in the country recently. Revolutionary ideas from Russia are being imported and the overthrow of the present social structure, with all its privileges and vested interests, is being aimed at. Nothing can be more tragic than the success of such revolutionary ideas in this country. India is neither ready for a system of Socialism or would it be possible or feasible to engraft such an alien system successfully here. Moreover, it is sheer folly to create class-hatred, when utmost unity is required to extract the fullest political power from the hands of the Britishers. The socialistic preachings, therefore, at this time are most importune. But this does not mean that the problem of rural poverty and indebtedness can brook delay. It must be tackled immediately. The Government has taken up the rural uplift work recently and has been showing genuine sympathy for the uplift of the masses in various ways. Constant and sustained effort both on the part of the Government and non-official agencies, is needed. Closely allied with the problem of poverty, is the problem of how to reduce the enormous rural debt. No useful purpose will be served by talking of repudiating it. It must be reduced by legislative measures. The Debt Conciliation Boards, which are now being tried all over the country, will undoubtedly serve a useful purpose and it is to be hoped that our province also will establish such boards at the earliest possible time.

It is manifest to every one that the political discontent is the result of growing economic distress. The poverty of the masses, the depression in trade and the growing unemployment among the educated have all been contributing to the acuteness of the economic problem. It is, therefore, necessary that measures should be adopted to increase the national wealth by rapid industrialisation and proper economic planning. The Liberal party should, therefore, be able to formulate a definite programme of work before they go to the polls early next year.

#### The Presidential Address

Presiding over the Conference Sir *Cawasji Jehangir*, in the course of his speech, said :—

"In his autobiography, the Congress President has described us as follows : "Over trivial and unimportant matters, they grow quite excited and there is an amazing amount of houle and shouting." One would have imagined that he was describing himself and his party organisation ; for, they meet oftener than we do and on more than one occasion, after discussions lasting two or three days, they have produced a couple of resolutions which evade a decision on the main issues. There cannot be the slightest doubt that since the Pandit took over the helm of affairs of the Congress a few months ago there have been fundamental changes in the political atmosphere. The differences between us were well defined and were known to all who took an interest in political affairs. The Congress upholds the banner of independence. What that exactly means is very difficult to explain, as it has been defined in different ways by several of the leaders amongst them.

"We did not hide our disagreement with the non-co-operation and civil disobedience movements. We warned our countrymen of the unnecessary suffering they were undergoing and the harm they were doing by the disorganisation they were creating, specially in the City of Bombay. Nobody can assert that these movements met with any success. The failure has given cause for serious reflection to those who took part in them. During those critical three years India's cause lost ground considerably, greatly due to the policy and methods of the Congress. Congressmen will never admit

their own faults and the damage they have done, but they make every attempt in public to place all responsibility on the shoulders of those who struggled honestly and strenuously to obtain the best they could for their country.

"But, proclaims the President "that we Liberals have never been to prison as he has done on more than one occasion, that none of us have suffered as he has, and that, therefore, what right have we to challenge his wild out theories. He goes so far as to say that we should not be even given a hearing. I am prepared to admit that he has suffered. I am prepared to admit that he has given up many of the good things of the world as a sacrifice to his theories. But I am definitely not prepared to admit that he has done much good to his country by his sufferings or by his sacrifice. He has a right to inflict suffering on himself if he chooses, but he should be blamed and rightly taken to task for having led others to suffer when clearly warned that such suffering would not help our country a step further towards political liberty and freedom. We have just as much a right as any one to warn our countrymen and women against methods which might injure the interests of the motherland.

The President of the Congress is now carrying on a vigorous propaganda for a form of Government for this country different to any visualised by the Congress up-to-now. He believes that the only solution of India's problems lies in socialism, not in any vague humanitarian sense, but in the scientific and economic sense—in other words, communism. He has clearly explained what he means. To him all capitalists are reactionaries. All who went to the Round Table Conference, I presume including Mr. Gandhi, are to him also reactionaries. His one ambition is to rouse the peasantry and the masses against the capitalists. To him a joint front can alone be one of the peasantry and the workers.

If any school of thought or political party desires to see anarchy and bloodshed throughout the country, let them advocate and try to put into practice these ideals of communism. As if we had not what appear to be unsurmountable obstacles in attaining political freedom and a democratic system of Government, we have now the President of the Congress "with an amazing amount of holla and shouting", advocating policies and systems which are bound to bring greater dissensions and engender more bitterness amongst the peoples of this country. There is no misunderstanding him. He sees no good in political freedom unless the freedom brings him a form of Government such as Russia introduced and is now fast changing. He hates the word 'Imperialism', not because imperialism may be an obstacle to political liberty, but because imperialism will, under no circumstances, mix with communism. He would, for the same reasons, reject Dominion Status, even if he could get it, because under Dominion Status he finds no success for communism. He has no faith in a democratic system of Government again, because he feels that communism and democracy cannot go together. He will have none of the policies for which the Congress itself has been fighting by direct methods. He is at present in a minority, and even as the President of his great party he is making every endeavour during his period of office to turn the minority into a majority.

Questions of discipline in other parties are not our concern, but if we are in agreement with the majority in the Congress in this respect, we have a right to protest against the actions of a man who takes advantage of his official position to carry on propaganda in the country, the principles of which we most strenuously and bitterly oppose.

The Pandit truly complains that he has found a spirit of disunion spreading over the land. Does he not realise that for the President of the Congress to openly advocate class-hatred and bitterness is merely adding to our troubles at a time when every endeavour should be made for uniformity of policy and uniformity of action?

The Liberals, I am sure, are prepared to make a joint effort with any political party for the study and formulation of a practical economic programme on lines which have proved successful in countries other than Russia, and without causing disturbance to the existing order of things.

I will now come to the burning topic of the day, but which the President of the Congress believes to be comparatively trivial. The policy of the Liberals of fighting the elections and in accepting office, has been announced and propounded in the Press and from the platform. We do not desire our future cabinets to seek deadlocks. At the same time, we insist that no cabinet in any provincial Government shall avoid a deadlock at the sacrifice of a principle. We are left in no doubt as to the personal views of the President of the Congress but we also do know that the

Congress has decided to fight the elections. Alas ! we are left guessing as to the real purpose they have in getting into the Legislatures. They have not yet decided whether Congressmen should accept office and form ministries.

Now what about ourselves ? Are we satisfied with our present position in the country ? There are literally thousands of thinking men and women in India who agree with our principle and who in their heart of hearts believe that our policy has been in the best interests of our country. I could name a number of men of standing all over India whose politics do not differ from ours but who are not members of the liberal party. We may even have to plead guilty to lack of propaganda and to lack of enthusiasm in our members. Let us remedy these defects before we are compelled to do so by the force of circumstances. Let us not forget that it may then be too late. I admit that politics is a hard task master, and very often requires the whole of our time and undivided attention. Let us try our best to see that such petty jealousies and quarrels do not keep us divided when unity and a joint front might make up all the differences to mother India.

#### Resolutions

The Conference passed the following among other resolutions :—

This Conference records its satisfaction at the unanimous report of the Agricultural Indebtedness Commission appointed by the Zanzibar Government which supports the conclusions arrived at by Mr. K. P. S. Menon, I. C. S., who in his report to the Government of India exposed the one-sided character of the anti-Indian decrees and requests the Government of India to press for the repeal of these decrees.

This Conference, while strongly opposed to the principle of residential and commercial segregation of Indians, on which the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of the Union of South Africa is based, press upon the Union Government the justice and necessity of providing adequately for the existing and the future needs in dealing with the report of the Feetham Commission. This Conference also urges the Government of India to take steps to protect the rights and interests of Indian settlers in connection with the operation of the Union Slums Act. This Conference accords cordial welcome to the deputation from South Africa which is visiting India and trusts it will lead to a better understanding between the two countries.

The Conference is of opinion that every effort should be made to put up Liberal candidates for both the Chambers of the Bombay Legislature and recommends to the Liberal Associations in the Presidency to take active steps in this behalf.

The Liberal candidates shall appeal to the electorate on an undertaking to carry out the following programme :—

(a) to secure early revision of the new Constitution with a view to attainment of Dominion Status at the earliest possible date ; (b) that Ministers will resign office if the safeguards or reserved powers of the Governors are exercised unreasonably or arbitrarily for interfering with the responsibility of Ministers, or if the Governor acts against the spirit of the Constitution ; (c) to promote and support legislation having for its object the improvement of the condition of the agriculturists by :— (1) a reform of the land revenue system ; (2) protection of the interests of agricultural tenants ; (3) relief of agricultural indebtedness by such measures as debt conciliation and legislation for debt redemption through extension of the policy of establishing land mortgage banks and improvements of existing co-operative agencies ; (4) encouragement of indigenous industries and particularly cottage industries by all possible measures ; (5) establishment of a system of compulsory primary education particularly among the Labour and Scheduled Classes ; (6) rural uplift through such measures as improved sanitation, medical relief, better housing, improved animal husbandry, etc., (7) measures for the purpose of relieving unemployment both of industrial and agricultural labour and of educated classes ; (8) legislation for the purpose of protecting the interests of and improving the condition of industrial and agricultural labour ; and (9) removal of untouchability by all suitable means.

In his concluding remarks, Sir Cowasji dwelt with the problem of the establishment of the Civil Liberties Union recently raised by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. He observed they were unable to support the movement because it had not come from untainted quarters ; for, they, on the one hand, wanted a form of government introduced in Russia and on the other preferred to protect the liberties of the citizens. Thus they were out with their communistic preachings. But communism was the direct antithesis of the theory of civil rights.

The Conference at this stage concluded.

# The All India Hindu Mahasabha

18th. Session—Lahore—21st. to 23rd. October 1936

## The Welcome Address

The 18th session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha opened at Lahore on the 21st. October 1936, under the presidency of *Shankaracharya Dr. Kurkoti*. There was a large attendance including Raja Narendra Nath, Bhai Parmanand, Sir Gokul Chaud Narag and delegates from other provinces.

*Rai Bahadur Ramsarandas*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of his welcome speech, traced the origin of the Hindu Mahasabha and claimed that on the one hand it stood for pure and unadulterated nationalism and on the other for the protection of the political rights of the Hindus.

Mr. Ramsarandas said that for quite a number of years, the Indian National Congress was the only political association taking interest in the political welfare of the country and it was a common meeting ground for Hindus, Muslims and other communities for solving India's political problems. He then traced separatist tendencies such as the starting of the Muslim League and the deputation to Lord Minto and said, "Hindus began to lose heavily in representation in the Legislatures and the services and Muslims began to enjoy favours out of all proportion to their numbers and without any regard for educational qualifications or tax-paying capacity. It was as a protest against this communal policy of the Government and the separatist tendencies of Muslims that the Hindu Sabha came to be established at Lahore in 1907."

After tracing how the Congress showed itself, prepared even to sacrifice the interests of the Hindus as a whole in order to win the support of the Muslims during the constitutional negotiations, Mr. Ramsarandas said that it became the Mahasabha's work to look to Hindu interests without sacrificing the larger interests of the country.

Mr. Ramsarandas discussed the various questions affecting the Hindus such as Suddhi, the physical condition of Hindus, amelioration of Harijans, and protection of Hindu women and ryots and urged that the Hindus should stand united and be self-reliant.

As regards Suddhi and Sangathan, the speaker said that the Hindu Mahasabha could not look with indifference on processes that continued to thin their ranks. He also strongly urged the starting of physical culture centres and Akbaras (gymnasiums) all over the country to improve the general physical condition of Hindu youths.

Referring to the Bombay riots, Mr. Ramsarandas said, "The Hindu community as a whole has always shunned violence of any kind as enjoined by its Shastras but developments of recent years, political and otherwise, tended to intensify communal discord and mischief-makers have been given wide scope to accomplish their plan. It is for leaders of all communities to take stock of the situation and put an end to this suicidal policy."

## The Presidential Address

The following are extracts from the Presidential Address by *Shri Shankaracharya (Dr. Kurkoti)* :—

You are all aware, I am one of the religious heads and you have chosen me to be your president, inspite of the limitations to which religious heads or pontiffs are subject in deliberations which are to be conducted and settled through the machinery of votes and ballot-boxes—in one word by modern democratic methods—and not by methods of ex-cathedra judgments and through channels of pontifical authority. We clerical men and particularly those of us who are bishops or abbots or high priests, and the proposition is true not only of the Hindu hierarchy, but of all clerics and hierarchies of every precious creed and cult in this subinary world, are in a way a hardened race, lacking in tender pliancy and adaptability. We are move from pet theories or crotchets and utterly incapable of being moved into a conciliatory position or shunted on to the rails or tracks of co-operation, on any but

dictatorial principles. In this want of adaptability, this estrangement from the comeli-histroy spirit, this incapacity for compromise, the priestly class compares very unfavourably with the laity. Instead of helping to create that unity which is enjoined by all religions and which is the very soul or spirit of all religions these ecclesiastical heads, these Pandits and Divines, only create squabbles and controversies. It is as if the children should ask for bread and parents give them stones. I impute this sad state of things to a misconception of duty, to an undue spirit of self-importance and self-sufficiency, to an exclusiveness that must lead, if not to death, at least to the blindness of their spiritual children in matters of social and political as well as spiritual interest. That you have unanimously elected me to be your president, inspite of this reputation of the priestly class for stiff-necked exclusiveness, puts a double burden on me. This implicit faith you have reposed in me must make me rise to the occasion. While not forgetting my spiritual position, I must try to adapt myself to the secular point of view of the laity. I must in short identify myself entirely with you all and that to such an extent that besides being what I am I should feel that I am a Buddha among the Buddhists, a Jain among the Jains, a Brahmo among the Brahmos, an Arya Samajist among the Arya Samajists, a Sikh among the Sikhs, "depressed" among the 'depressed' and what not.

#### UNITY OF FAITHS

This attitude on my part is in no way novel as it is the quintessence of the non-dualistic philosophy of the great Shri Shankaracharya whose humble follower I represent myself to be. As Shri Goudapadaacharya, the Guru of Shri Shankaracharya's Guru, has so aptly remarked :

"The dualists being bent upon establishing the truth of their own system of thought fight among themselves while the system of non-dualism comes in conflict with none". This system of non-dualism which leads to the realization of the underlying unity of all religions, should not be mistaken for various current views about the uniformity of all religions that are propounded with some selfish motives or without any real knowledge or experience of any of these systems of religion. The Indian National Congress, though it rightly accepts the principle of equality of rights of all communities, fails miserably for reasons of its own to protect the civil rights of the Hindus even when they are ferociously attacked by the followers of alien faiths. This national policy of the Congress in the pure realm of politics should not be mistaken for unity of faiths. Unity of faiths is not consistent with a state of things in which one community asserts itself over the other and compels it to yield in all matters. Real unity lies in the co-operation for all practical purposes of the different communities, each strong and virile in itself, yet with no intention to attack and encroach upon the rights of others. That is exactly why the Hindus must stir themselves up and strengthen their community so that they may stand on a footing of equality with others, always offering their best co-operation but ever ready to repel alien aggression. We can reasonably go a step further and say that since Hindusthan is the one land where the Hindus and their culture can flourish, other faiths having their own independent nations, the Hindus ought to have a full and free scope to shape the destinies of their country.

The preservation and deep infusion of the Aryan culture within the unity of faiths will in no way be detrimental to the interests of other faiths.

The *summum bonum* of human life consists in the attainment of eternal knowledge and bliss and the communication and diffusion of it among all men. This noble ideal of human life has been realized by the Aryan sages more comprehensively and thoroughly than the sages or philosophers of any other nation. Though the originators of other religions may have aimed at the same ideal, yet with due deference to all of them, it can be safely said, that none of them succeeded in giving a philosophical basis to and a thoroughly rational explanation of the ideal that they realized in their individual case, and in preaching it to mankind at large. The principles of other religions, though useful in their own way, are limited in their scope and application. Christ's principle of patient suffering, though undoubtedly noble, can not be of universal application and has meaning only in the case of a few highly gifted souls and with particular limitations of time and space. The same is true of the teachings of Mahomed. On the other hand, the cardinal principles of the Hindu Dharma are absolutely universal in their nature and are true of all persons at all times and under all circumstances. The Hindu Dharma does not confine itself to any codes or commandments, knows no creed and is therefore beyond all limitations. Nor has it emanated from one single prophet. It is



aptly called 'Eternal Religion' (Sanatan Dharma). We have to love our neighbour according to Hindu Dharma not merely because he is our brother but specially because the same Atman (soul) permeates both. The Hindu Dharma is most tolerant, as it allows every individual complete freedom to choose any rational means for the attainment of the highest good without coming in the way of any other person and without being commanded to pay allegiance to a particular individual or scriptural authority. Even the most rational thinkers of the present day would be convinced of the truth of the principles preached by the Hindu philosophy and religion. 'Who can doubt the existence of one's own self? If any one doubts it, the very doubter is the self.'

This basic principle of rational philosophy was preached by Shri Shankaracharya hundreds of years even before Descartes who acquired a great name as an original thinker for having propounded his principle of Cogito Ergo Sum which is nothing more or less than what was taught by the great Acharya and which has served as a basis of all the rational philosophy of Europe. The views of the Hindu Dharma as regards God, Free Will and Immortality of the soul are equally rational and comprehensive. They try to reconcile the apparently conflicting claims of reason and faith in the higher synthetic category of reasoned faith. God is neither personal nor impersonal; in Him we find a synthesis of both personal and impersonal and yet He transcends both. This has been very clearly stated in a verse of the Bhagavad Gita.

But the followers of alien faiths entirely fail to understand this essentially rational and philosophical view of God of the Hindu Dharma and hence they violently attack the idolatrous view meant only for the ordinary people. Though God is beyond all forms and names, yet it is not in any way contradictory to rational thought to posit for practical purposes some form as representative of God. Even these alien faiths that condemn idolatry so vehemently, accept it willy nilly in some form or other, a book, a mosque, a church or a prophet. It is a thousand pities that so much blood should be shed on account of such an insignificant and innocent difference of opinion. On the contrary, the utmost limits of religious tolerance have been reached and preached in the Bhagvad-gita when it says:

Even if God is conceived in a way contrary to one's own method, that method too is encouraged but never condemned. This principle of tolerance is conducive to the good of the humanity and the world is in sore need of this principle at the present juncture, when the peace and good government of every nation are in the crucible of trial and test.

#### LIVE AND LET LIVE

One's heart cannot but be filled with indignation and fury to find that Hindustan, the home of such valuable heritage and glorious culture, should be turned into a battle-ground where so much innocent blood is being shed by alien faiths in the name of their religions. If it is the commandment of the Holy Quran that no music should be played before mosques, it is evidently binding only on the follower of that faith and they are at liberty to observe the principle in their own cases. But it passes one's reason why they should fanatically insist upon prohibiting the Hindus in the very land of Hinduism from playing music in the noisy streets when it is imperative on the part of the latter to have music played on their sacred occasions. It is really shameful and disgraceful that there should be so much bickering and heart-burning repeated on almost all occasions of the celebrations of the festivals. All such petty quarrels which end in bloodshed would be put a stop to if the followers of the offensive alien faiths are made to realize the noble purpose that the Hindu culture has been brought into being to serve. It is a culture meant to serve the whole of humanity by teaching it by example and precept the principle to live and let live.

But it can serve this purpose only if it lives. It will live only if the Hindus who are by no means inferior to others arise and awake from their torpor and assert their birth-right—complete freedom. And freedom is only possible if the alien faiths that have separate independent nations and spheres of activity of their own cultures are made to live here peacefully and on friendly terms with the Hindus. They must be made to understand that Hindustan is primarily for the Hindus and that the Hindus live for the preservation and development of the Aryan culture and the Hindu Dharma which are bound to prove beneficial to all humanity.

#### MINORITIES

Let this should create misgivings in the minds of minorities apprehending that they shall have no place in this country, I hasten to add that they shall never fail

to enjoy full cultural and religious freedom. As I have already pointed out, Hinduism stands for the principle of live and let live. But at the same time it must be remembered that the minorities cannot claim to have any superior political rights and power which prove detrimental to the interests of the Hindus and subversive of the Aryan culture. But that is exactly what the minorities are trying to establish through the communal decision.

I affirm that in Hindusthan the national race, religion and language ought to be that of the Hindus. With this as the basic principle of our national constitution joint electorates without any reservation of seats for particular groups or communities offer the right solution of the problem of minority representation. It will be in conformity with the highest ideals of democracy and also in keeping with the principles of equality and other tenets for which Hinduism stands. But if any guarantee or safeguard for the protection of any minorities is needed, the Minority Guarantee Treaties of the League of Nations provide it most effectively.

Let us see that our Muslim friends get all the protection that is necessary in the three spheres of religion, race and language wherever it is administratively feasible. Again, it must be remembered that the minority question in Hindusthan is one single Muslim question. It cannot be divided into provincial minority questions. Let us thoroughly realize the fact that according to the scheme the League has devised the religion, race and language of the majority community of a state (of Hindus in Hindusthan) shall be the national religion, race and language in every part, and in every province of the state even if the majority community of the state happens to be in minority in a particular province (e. g. the Punjab, Bengal, etc). This, I believe, is the fullest implication of the minority guarantee treaties and their logical application to the minority problems in Hindusthan.

#### THE COMMUNAL AWARD

The more I appreciate the zealous care and anxiety shown in the League's minority protection schemes for the preservation of the solidarity and integrity of a state, the more I am pained by the anticipated result of the Communal Decision. If the first strive to maintain solidarity, the second spells complete disruption. If the one is inspired by the high ideals of world peace, the other can be trusted only to perpetuate strife. If the first is based on the principles of justice and equity, the other cannot claim even their semblance.

What justification can there be in denying to the Hindus of the Punjab, Bengal, Sind and N. W. F. provinces the same weightage that is given to minority communities in other provinces? Can it be ever suggested that the division of various communities into water-tight compartments of separate electorates would be ever conducive to the fostering of the feelings of nationhood? Can the representatives of such separate communal electorates for one moment claim to be national representatives? Is this a wise and honest attempt to build one single united nation or a parody and caricature of a nation?

In the broader interests of Hindusthan and its national solidarity I reiterate that the Communal Decision ought to be scrapped and replaced by the League scheme for the protection of minorities.

While that scheme will solve the communal problem, it should not be supposed that thereby the Hindus will have achieved all their objectives of solidarity and the realization of living force. For while the Communal Decision delivers an attack from the outside, there are many dissipatory and cantankerous agencies within the structure of the Hindu society itself which gnaw at its vitals from within. There are many evil practices and institutions among the Hindus that have crept in now and then since the Hindus forgot the progressive principles of their ancestors, which all conspire to make the Hindus a weak and disjointed community. More than the Communal Decision it is these that menace Hinduism and the Hindus.

#### THE UNTOUCHABLES

It is not possible for me to deal with all these evil practices but I cannot shut my eyes to the question of the so-called untouchables, a most burning question. My sympathies always go with this poor class of our own people who have suffered wrong at our hands in the name of religion for a long time. No logic can support it, no sense of humanity can tolerate it. There should be no hesitation on our part to do away with the evil without the least delay.

I neither wish to waste my breath nor your precious time on proving that untouchability has no earthly reason to exist to-day when the causes and conditions that

at one time may have given rise to it are wholly absent. I have proved this to the hilt on many previous occasions as also at the last session of the Mahasabha held at Poona. The small and ever-dwindling coterie which still persists in the practice of untouchability is so ignorant as to have become blind to such noble teachings as the one in Mahabharata which says :

'Religion must have a rational grounding ; it does not mean doing what others do. While peaceful times need one religion, troubled times need quite a different one.' Again, the great Shankaracharya himself has said in his Gita Bhashya that the scriptures are to be depended upon only in matters which cannot be penetrated by reason. Thus, for example, says the Acharya, even if a hundred scriptural authorities were to say that fire is cool and without light it cannot be taken as the truth. The Shastras are not to be blindly followed to the last word but they are to be used only as a starting ground. This tendency of blindly following the scriptures is common to the followers of all faiths and hence quarrels on trivial matters always arise. What an irony that even when such are the views of the great Acharya to whom we owe our existence to-day and when the people are clamouring for something more invigorating and broadening than that the Shastras are in a position to give to-day, some of us should still be stultifying themselves in the now stagnant pool of the Shastras.

But while this is true of only a small section, the Hindus in general to-day accept that untouchability ought to go. The only question that to-day faces us is how soon it should be driven underground, not to rise again but to lie there for all time.

I do not hold the view as some do that the practice of untouchability revolts against humanitarianism, that we must take pity on the unfortunate untouchables and that we should concede to them their due rights in a charitable mood. Pity and charity in any form are detestable to me. I stand for the removal of untouchability not because I pity the untouchables' lot but because it is the untouchables' right not to remain untouchables any more. It is hence that the term Harijan is not agreeable to me because it connotes charity and pity. Moreover a mere change in terminology is not going to solve the problem. It is sometimes said that Dr. Ambedkar is the villain of the piece and it is he who by his 'wanton' speeches creates animosities. On the contrary, I should say that we should be all grateful to him for his ceaseless and brave efforts in arousing the untouchable masses and creating within them a deep sense of shame for the humiliations and sufferings they have been undergoing and preparing them to wipe off the dirty tar with which they have been besmeared so far. We must also admit that we owe even our own eye-opening and mass awakening in this matter to Dr. Ambedkar's militant attitude.

#### UNTOUCHABLES AND SIKHISM\*

I now come to the most pertinent question which is hanging before the Hindu community and that is, should the untouchables change over to Sikhism. I must emphatically say that those who wish to, should be allowed to join that sect. It is not insisted that all untouchables should go over in a body and join Sikhism. The sanction to embrace Sikhism means that those untouchables who cannot tolerate any more the humiliating conditions under which they have to live should be allowed a chance to improve their condition by becoming members of a community which they feel gives them what they want. And those that are not so impatient, I should say so keenly self-respecting, and are satisfied with the pace of uplift which the caste Hindus are attempting to make, should remain with us and bide their time. I cannot help noting here with regret that one of the reasons given by Itoo Bahadur Rajah in rejecting the Ambedkar-Moonje formula, namely that it would antagonise the Muslims against the untouchables, came to me as an unpleasant surprise. Does it not reveal a pusillanimous attitude? Does it not show that all the talk about no barrier of religion is mere eyewash and that what is really at the bottom of the opposition to the formula is the fear of Muslims? Can any words be sufficient to condemn such poltroonery?

The temple Satyagraha at Nasik revealed to me two salient facts. Firstly, a large section of the untouchables has grown militant during recent years and is clamouring for immediate relief. Secondly, it is futile to coax the so-called Sanatanists into agreeing to concede to the untouchables their legitimate rights. This revelation prompted me to advise Dr. Ambedkar and his followers to stop wasting their energies in trying to persuade the orthodoxy and to found a sect of their own or to go over to one of the existing sects of Hinduism which does not flourish on

\*For Ambedkar-Moonjee formula see *post*.

untouchability. Later on I advised a change over to Sikhism because of the obvious redeeming features of that sect.

I must first make it clear that for a Hindu to change to Sikhism is not conversion nor is it a lesser evil as some are inclined to think. Conversion implies embracing an alien faith. Nothing could be more ridiculous than to suppose that Sikhism is alien to Hinduism. Most certainly it is not, as it has sprung from Hinduism itself. It is only one of the many protestant sects of Hinduism. I think this misconception prevailing among some of the Sikhs and some sections of the Hindus that the Sikhs are not Hindus is generally responsible for the unnecessary hue and cry raised over the Ambedkar-Moonje formula and the violent opposition shown to it in some quarters.

As I said above, Sikhism has certain redeeming features. The most important among them is that that section of the Hindus alone has not forgotten the most essential part of a man's equipment for life and that is the Kirpan (Kirpan). The Sikhs are the warrior class of the Hindus, their militant vanguard. Is it not for our own good that that class should be increased and strengthened by the fusion of newer and fresher blood? Can it not be said from this point of view that it is not a lesser evil but a greater good that the untouchables should become Sikhs? Will it not be suicidal for us all to ignore this problem and oppose the move to embrace Sikhism in the face of persistent and ever increasing effort in foreign Muslim and Christian countries to raise funds and send missions to get the untouchables converted to their respective folds?

#### HINDUISM AND CONVERSION

I think a great disservice has been done to the Hindu community by the thoroughly mistaken view held by its leaders in the immediately preceding centuries that only a Hindu by birth was a Hindu and hence conversion was altogether ruled out. This has aggravated the danger facing the Hindus from the proselytizing activities of the missionaries of alien faiths, which have gone on without being counteracted even by any assimilation of members of those faiths in our fold. A section of the Hindus still persists in saying that Hinduism does not allow of any conversions. Some followers of alien faiths repeat this like parrots and oppose Hindu missionary activities which are to-day in evidence. But this is absurd. Of course, forcible conversion is unknown to Hinduism. What the early Hindus, the Aryans, did was to slowly absorb the aborigines in their fold and if this fact is not realised by many it is because the absorption was gradual and was not attended by any pompous ceremonies and heralding trumpets. The aborigines as well as the outcasts were interceptably absorbed as they reached the then prevailing standard of culture and polish. Till that standard was reached these people were of course kept aloof and I think the forgetting by later generation of this underlying principle of segregation was one of the causes that later gave rise to the institution of untouchability. I have myself admitted in recent years some English, French and American ladies to Hinduism and I am glad to say that none of them has been in any way inferior to Hindu women proper. I have seen for myself that within 8 years of her conversion Her Highness Maharani Sharmisthadevi Holkar, Miss Nancy Miller as she previously was, has proved herself to be even more of a Hindu than any originally Hindu woman. I am sure that if she had become the Indore Maharani some years previous to when she actually did, Indore would not have seen such bad days.

Though the Hindus need not be over-anxious to convert aliens to Hinduism and should have only those of them converted who wish to do so of their own accord, I must emphasize that ceaseless and determined attempts must be pursued to readmit into our fold those of us who have gone out due to their ignorance and our indifference. This is a matter which the Hindu Mahasabha must seriously take in hand. The Mahasabha must remember that it is a body of Hindus not merely by birth but also by adoption.

The Mahasabha must also be on the alert to defend the interests of Hindus abroad. Hinduism in overseas countries is always shadowed by the mortal danger of state-aided missionary evangelising activities. I think the Sabha ought to consider seriously the proposal coming from the Nairobi Hindu Union that the Hindus abroad should be organized in Hindu Sabhas which should be affiliated to the central body in Hindusthan. That would bring us all closer together and strengthen our fraternal ties. Besides this, I should suggest that Hindu missionaries ought to be sent abroad to keep up the flame of Hinduism afloat and to prevent any of our brethren from embracing an alien faith through mistaken views.

If Hinduism is to be a strong living force—as we have seen that it richly deserves to be—for contributing to the real welfare of mankind if its message is to be carried to every nook and corner of the world without the least tinge of self-importance and self-aggrandisement, then the Hindu society must needs be re-organized by inspiring it with the true spirit of Hindu Dharma, by teaching it to have a scientific outlook on life and by making it healthy both in body and mind and strong enough to carry on its work, reflecting its strength in every word it speaks and in every move it makes. The Hindu Mahasabha which is the only premier representative institution of the Hindus ought to organize itself in such a manner as to be able to achieve all these objectives. There should be a strong elected representative executive at the centre of this body which can sketch the plan of action and work it out. Fresh blood should be infused in it by changing some members of that executive body by rotation but consistency of policy should be maintained by retaining a few members in office for some more years.

Sufficient funds have also to be raised to finance the activities of the executive as no institution can successfully function without a substantial fund to back it. Every real full-blooded Hindu can easily be induced to liberally contribute to such a fund raised for a worthy cause and with a definite purpose.

The culture of a nation is vitally connected with its language. The stamp of a foreign culture on a nation can be detected from the impress of a foreign language on the mother-tongue. Every independent nation guards and preserves its national language for this reason. Hindusthan therefore should insist on making Hindi the lingua-indica of the country. We should realize the fact that every foreign word admitted into our language spells the death of the original Hindi synonym of it. Such indiscreet incorporation does not enrich the language but on the contrary it weakens it. We should emphasize the purity of the Hindu language just as we insist on the purity of the Hindu culture.

This inevitable cosmopolitan basis of the Congress and the attacks made on the Hindus are the very factors that justify the existence of the Hindu Mahasabha. It is for this body to keep vigilant and protect the rights and interests of the Hindus whenever they are in danger. The peculiar position of Hindusthan ordains the existence of two such different bodies which without mutual hostility should cooperate wherever possible.

I have made it clear that it is no use blaming the Congress for its indifference towards Hindu interests. But it is equally clear that under the circumstances the Hindu Mahasabha ought to have its own representatives in the legislatures to guard the interests and promote the rights of the Hindus. The Mahasabha therefore, should fight the elections on its own ticket but that fight should be on the clear issue of the protection of Hindu interests. Hostile criticisms of the Congress should not be unnecessarily indulged in.

## Proceedings and Resolutions

### Second Day—Lahore—22nd. October 1936

#### U. P. DELEGATES NOT ADMITTED

There was a sensation at the Mahasabha session this morning when local organisers refused delegates' tickets to the members of the United Provinces Sabha (which is recognised by Pandit Malaviya) including Pandit Kadasanta Malviya and two others. They were offered admission as visitors, but the latter refused to attend in that capacity and went away in protest.

At the time of the commencement of the session a scuffle ensued in a corner of the Pandel from where shouts of "Malaviya Zindabad" were heard. Rival groups were seen to lift chairs to throw them at each other. One man was injured on the nose. Police took into custody three persons, who were released later on.

According to one version of the incident, the cries of "Malaviya Zindabad" were resented by the opponents. According to another version, distribution of pamphlets led to the fight. Later constables (a large posse of whom were present in the premises) were seen sitting in the midst of visitors and even delegates.

#### THE SANATANISITS' WALK-OUT

Protesting against certain expressions in the presidential address, particularly relating to Harijans and their suggested conversion to Sikhism, some members of the

Mahasabha, the most prominent of whom being Rai Bahadur Ramsarandas, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Rai Bahadur Hindasaran, and Diwan Kishankishore announced their withdrawal from further sittings of the Conference. They later issued a statement declaring that the President was not right in preaching from the Mahasabha platform for or against different sects of Hinduism.

The seceders were Sanatanists, who objected to Dr. Kurtkoti's interpretation of the Shastras and Sanatana Dharma and dictum that for Harijans to embrace Sikhism was no conversion. Prior to commencement of the session, their spokesmen were closeted with Dr. Kurtkoti for several hours and requested him to delete the reference to conversion but the President, it was understood, offered to withdraw from the session rather than suppress his convictions.

In announcing their withdrawal from further sittings of the Mahasabha session, Sanatanist leaders declared that they had explained to the President the genesis of the organisation of the Mahasabha viz., that it was to be and act as a body which, without interfering with or disturbing the tendencies of any section of the Hindu Community—"in which we welcome Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists".—was to protect their interests as representing as a whole and this had been the guiding principle of the Hindu Mahasabha hitherto. Conversion or preaching conversion from one section into another had never been permitted to come within the scope of the Mahasabha's work much less could that be advocated from the platform of the Sabha's annual gathering like the present one.

At its evening session, the Mahasabha adopted five resolutions, the most important of them being,

#### THE GURMUKHI CIRCULAR

The Sabha condemned the anti-Hindu Gurmukhi circular in the North-West Frontier as a direct attack on the language and culture of the Hindu and Sikh minorities in the Frontier and decided to form a deputation of the Sabha, together with Sikh leaders, to wait on H. E. the Viceroy in that connection.

#### REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The Sabha reiterated the resolution passed in the Poona session on the subject of removal of untouchability and called on the Hindus throughout India to carry into effect the said resolution with a view to preserving the integrity of the Hindu Society. It reaffirmed the previous resolutions for giving equal access to all Hindus, irrespective of caste or creed, to all public amenities and institutions such as schools, wells, tanks, ghats, hotels, roads, parks, dharmasalas and public places of worship.

The Sabha further reaffirmed its faith that untouchability is not regarded as part of the Hindu religion or social system.

#### ABOLITION OF CASTE

The Sabha recommended to the Hindus the abolition of all distinctions in the Hindu Society based on birth or caste in spheres of public, social and political life as they are out of place in the present age.

Another resolution felicitated His Highness the Maharaja of Gwalior on his assumption of the reins of his administration.

All resolutions were passed unanimously but speaking on the untouchability resolution, Mr. *Rajbhaj*, Depressed Classes leader from Poona, declared that some constructive work for the uplift of Harijans would be far more welcome than such resolutions and sympathies.

The resolution on the anti-Hindi Gurmukhi circular was moved by Rai Bahadur *Mehar Chand Khanna* of Peshawar.

Speaking on this resolution, Dr. *Radha Kumud Mukherjee* said that it was not a local question but one affecting the culture of all India because the circular did great violence to international law. The resolution was passed unanimously.

The resolution on Harijans was moved by Principal *Devichand* of Hoshiarpur. Mr. *Rajbhaj* proceeded to criticise Dr. Ambedkar, but was checked by the President, who said he would not allow any personal remarks.

This resolution as well as two others relating to Hindus in Kashmir and the orders recently issued by the Northern Command as affecting the Hindu personnel in their services, were passed unanimously, whereafter the Mahasabha adjourned.

**SIKHS' ADDRESS**

A feature of the session was the interest evinced in it by Sikhs. The Gurustagh Sabha presented an address to Dr. Kurthoti at the open session, stating that if Harijans wished to stay where they were, it was well and good.

Sikhs, in the course of their address, said: "If the Depressed Classes choose to remain where they are, we are perfectly satisfied, but if they cannot be persuaded to remain where they are, then we expect that you will see them join the Sikh religion, which, in loftiness of its ideals and in feelings of brotherhood and equality occupies a unique position. We beseech you to save the Depressed Classes from embracing either Christianity or Islam, for we cannot tolerate the idea of their adopting any foreign religion."

**Third Day—Lahore—23rd October 1936**

The Mahasabha concluded this evening, after passing a number of resolutions.

At the outset, *Bhai Parmanand*, who occupied the Chair temporarily in the absence of Dr. Kurthoti, explained the genesis of his difference with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He said that Pandit Malaviya wanted to entrust the election work to the Congress Nationalist Party, whereas Bhai Parmanand was strongly of opinion that as long as election was by separate electorates, the Hindu Mahasabha must canvass for Hindu seats. He instanced the case of the United Provinces where the Hindus were 80 per cent of the population and said that it would be suicidal to entrust their interests to the Congress Nationalists.

Bhai Parmanand also explained why the Mahasabha Pandal was not given to Harijans for use and stated that the organisers feared that the two wings of Harijans might create rowdysim.

**AWARD CONDEMNED**

The Mahasabha condemned the Communal Award and the Government's communal policy as anti-national and undemocratic, and reaffirmed its faith that the best solution of the Indian communal problem was an international solution as embodied in various minority treaties accepted by so many States after the war in Europe, including Turkey.

There was a heated discussion culminating in confusion at one stage over a resolution urging the stoppage of the slaughter of cows and other animals in Brijmaudal (birth-place of Sri Krishna) at Mathura.

The resolution was passed together with Mr. Narinjandas' amendment that in case this demand was not conceded by the end of December, 1936, active steps, in the nature of Satyagraha, be adopted by the Mahasabha.

Bhai Parmanand, by another amendment, wanted that the words "by the Mahasabha" be deleted from the above amendment, but Mr. Narinjandas' amendment was passed amidst cries of "Mahasabha-ki-jai".

**FUND FOR SANGATHAN WORK**

The Mahasabha decided to create a permanent fund to enable it to carry on multifarious activities for Hindu Sangathan work and to appoint a committee under the presidency of Mr. Jugal Kishore Birla to raise the necessary funds. It was also resolved that the Hindu National flag, as designed by the Working Committee, expressing the central ideas of Hindu nationalism and spirituality, be adopted.

The Mahasabha deplored the acts of serious rioting, bloodshed and arson in Bombay and criticised the attitude of Muslims with regard to the legitimate exercise of their religious right by Hindus.

The meeting recommended that Hindus all over India should congregate from time to time in their respective villages, towns and cities to exchange views on the various problems facing Hindus and for spreading the propaganda of the Mahasabha. By another resolution, the Mahasabha condemned the statement made to the press by certain individuals against the President of the Hindu Mahasabha and expressed its fullest confidence in him.

A resolution recommended that immediate steps be taken to improve the physical condition of the Hindus and that military schools and volunteer corps be started in order to enable Hindus better to defend their hearths and homes.

In his closing remarks Dr. Kurthoti maintained that his interpretation of the Shastras was a correct one and said that Sikhs were part and parcel of Hindus and he was glad to find that they were such a brave and martial people.

The Mahasabha at this stage concluded its session.

# The Bengal Hindu Conference

## Mr. Chatterjee's Opening Address

With a view to discussing the grave problems which the Hindu community had to face, a session of the Bengal Hindu Conference was held at the hall of the Indian Association, Calcutta on the 15th. August 1926. Dr. Radhakumud Matherjee presided and *Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee* opened the proceedings.

In opening the Conference, *Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee* said that the entire Hindu community, especially that in Bengal, had been faced with a grave crisis. It might be thought that the Hindus have been put in a difficult situation. But it was through dangers and difficulties that a nation's worth was tasted. The younger section among them should on no account feel disappointed nor would it be proper for the older people who were approaching their ends to lose heart.

*Sj. Chatterjee* at present could not clearly find out by what exact means the revival of the Hindu community would be accomplished, but he believed in his heart of hearts that the great community would suffer no downfall. For that, however, they should not rely upon fate but should rely upon their courage, strength and honesty of purpose.

It was not a mere belief of his, proceeded the speaker, but the past history of the Community would substantiate it. Through vicissitudes of fortune, storms and stress, they had continued to manage their existence and maintain their culture and civilisation; whereas only the names of many ancient nations existed to-day. The recent discoveries in Mohenjo-daro would go to prove that the Hindus had inherited their ancient culture and tradition from their forefathers thousands of years ago.

That might be criticised as boasting on the part of the Hindus; but no nation could live without firm confidence in their own selves. Rabiindranath had sung that India's chariot of progress had passed through the uneven track of rise and fall. To-day she might have lost her position but it might not be long for her to regain that glory which had once been hers.

There were some facts, pointed out the speaker, the recounting of which might hearten the heart of the Hindus. India's cultural influence had spread over far off lands in the distant part. By sword she did not conquer those countries. Her conquest was that of culture, the signs of which were still extant in those regions.

The Hindu of to-day were well known for their toleration and respect for other people's views and sentiments. Under the new constitution they had been grouped as General Seats. Government, by this procedure, had indirectly admitted that the Hindus did not exist for their own community alone but strove for the welfare of every community.

While the other communities had sought their own interests, the Hindus alone endeavoured for the common weal. The worst feature of the communal award was that it had divided the country into so many watertight compartments and negated the ideal of nationalism.

Discussing the social problems, *Sj. Chatterjee* pointed out that the most important subjects that should attract their attention were women's welfare and the right of scheduled castes. That religion which went to harm the interests of the society should never be deemed as a true religion. According to 'shastras' it might be modified when necessity arose.

There had been a persistent decrease in the number of women in the Hindu community. There might be a number of reasons for this state of affairs. In Bengal the number of birth of girls were less than that of boys. Unlike western people women here committed more suicides than men. Death due to child-birth increased mortality among them. This problem of women's welfare, according to the speaker, was not less important than political problems facing the community.

As regards the rights of the scheduled castes, *Sj. Chatterjee* would not say much but would point to the great saying of poet Chandidas that man was above all the rest. Unless they were given their just rights political salvation would remain far distant.

Bengalee Hindus had been ousted from the industrial life of the province. Jute mills, cloth mills, sugar mills etc., were mostly in the hands of the foreigners and people from other provinces. Very good cotton was grown in this province, but the



Agriculture Department of the Government, for reasons best known to them, were not directing their attention towards it. Sea-voyage being prohibited by the 'Shastras' the art of navigation had passed into the hands of the Mohamedans of places like Chittagong and foreigners.

The number of Hindus among the agriculturists was decreasing. That was not a good sign. The race which dissociated itself from the earth was sure to lose its vitality. If the Hindu youths went to the villages and settled there as agriculturists then considerable benefit would have accrued to the community leading to the suppression of crime against Hindu women.

Referring to political situation in the country, B. Chatterjee pointed out that the Communal Award had totally ignored the claims of the Hindus. The memorial which they lately sent to the authorities had also been summarily rejected. But that should not dishearten them in any way. For, the Hindus in the past had maintained their existence and in the present would maintain it and by so doing would contribute something that would elevate the entire nation.

### The Presidential Address

A dismal picture of the present position of Bengal was drawn by Dr. Radhakrishnan Mookerjee in the course of his presidential address. Thanks to the political preoccupations and factions of the leaders at the top, the foundations of national life and prosperity have, he opined, been neglected and weakened, so that Bengal to-day stands as the poorest province in India, with proportionately the least revenue, and even her revenue resources rendered incapable of expansion.

The Bengalees to-day is the most heavily taxed Indian who pays most to the State and gets the least from it. No wonder that every Bengalee, Moslem and Hindu, is now looking to his brethren of other provinces in all walks of national life, cultural, economic and administrative. Planned national economy alone can cope with the situation created by the planned economies of national governments all over the world, was Dr. Mookerji's emphatic opinion.

Dealing with the common woes from the new dispensation, Dr. Mookerji pointed out that some of these will fall more heavily on our Moslem brethren, on the millions of down-trodden and poverty-stricken peasantry who form the majority of the provincial population.

This phenomenal poverty of Bengal, he said, is not her natural portion but an artificial creation, the consequence of an unscientific Federal Finance which, on account of unjustifiable deductions levied by the Centre, leaves to the province a residual revenue that is hopelessly inadequate to its present and future needs, the needs of its expanding population. Bombay, with its population of 19 millions, which is less than even half of Bengal, has been granted a residual revenue far in excess of that given to Bengal.

Bengal's revenue position has suffered so disastrously by mere default, because her leaders, official or non-official, have not put her financial case and claims against Federation in a proper and persistent manner. With a gross revenue exceeding 37 crores per annum, she has been dismissed with a short shrift with a revenue of only about 11 crores to feed 20 millions of her children, while more business like Bombay has sliced a revenue of over 15 crores to feed only her 19 millions. The revenue per head in Bengal is appallingly low, as compared with most other provinces.

World-forces have also conspired with domestic factors against Bengal's prosperity. The brunt of economic depression has laid low all her national key industries on which that prosperity depends, viz., coal, tea and jute. Planned national economy alone can cope with the situation created by the planned economies of national governments all over the world.

Along with jute, Bengal's agriculture is at its worst, with her dying rivers, with absence of schemes of river-training and control of floods, or of plans for opening up new sources of irrigation on which provinces like the Punjab and Sind have been spending crores. A non-paying agriculture is now in the grip of a hopeless indebtedness which the country is not yet seriously handling. A policy of drift will only be drifting towards a revolution.

But Bengal is robbed not merely of her revenue and the resources of recovery, she is also robbed of her territory. She has lost to other provinces the best of her regions, some of her healthiest districts, rich mines, and prosperous plantations. She has also lost to them a sturdy population. Her loss is not merely material, but moral and cultural.

Nearly four million Bengalis are now living as exiles, and discontented minorities, in Bihar, and have further caused to their mother-country a loss of annual revenue assessed at nearly two crores of rupees. The partition of Bengal still remains.

His late Majesty the King-Emperor, while announcing its annulment, promised a well-considered solution of frontier problems. The Simon Commission also suggested a Boundaries Commission to settle these problems regarding boundaries.

Even Orissa has seceded from Bihar as a linguistic and cultural unit. It is Bengal alone that must always lose. She cannot call back her exiled sons, nor claim the territories which are hers by both history and right. The territorial problem is no less urgent than the financial problem of Bengal, but her leaders are equally apathetic to both.

Turning to the communal problem, which has split the country from top to bottom into warring communities whom the coming Constitution will not permit to unite from promoting the good of the whole, Dr. Mookerjee said: The Constitution is based in a ruthless and thorough-going manner upon communal electorate and representation which rests fundamentally, not on the conception of common citizenship, but on the conception of communities as so many separate nationalities. The Constitution intends that the Hindus and Moslems must consider and organise themselves as separate nationalities, and not as nationals of the same State.

The Constitution is not planned as a democracy and will not give any scope to the growth of nationalism upon which democracy is based. Our Moslem brethren may gloat over their ill-gotten gains from the Communal Award. But their exultation will be only for a time when they will find that what the Constitution has given them is only a little power over the Hindus but hardly any powers of real self-government, while what they have gained will be of no help to them in solving the problem of dire poverty in which their masses, the rural millions, are deeply sunk.

The political classes at the top may be swept away by a revolution from below. It is only a united national effort of Hindus and Moslems that can avert the coming catastrophe.

In the face of this impending national disaster and economic crisis, cannot Hindus and Moslems unite as brethren, as children of a common soil, of the same mother Earth, scrap the Communal Award, which divides them, by an agreement of their own, and proceed boldly to recapture the lost position and prosperity of Bengal, to build her up as a vigorous democracy in a spirit of equality, fraternity and liberty, on the basis of equal partnership in legislation and administration? And, in this high endeavour, by accomplishing which Bengal can once more give lead to India, it is our Moslem brethren who can take the lead and show the way!

Dealing with the Hindu problem, Dr. Mookerji showed how the coming Constitution will specially handicap the Hindus of Bengal, whose case was recently represented, under the leadership of Poot Tagore, to the Secretary of State. Sounding a pessimistic note, the President said:

"But even the tallest of us do not count with the Government of the day, who are bent upon repressing the Hindus in every way. By a stroke of the pen, the Government has struck at all the progress that they have made, and the place they have won for themselves in the Government of the country by nearly a century of effort and enlightenment.

"The British Government forget that in repressing the Bengali Hindu they are really repressing their best work in India. The Bengali Hindu is the child of British rule, of the modern spirit it has introduced to India to its greatest credit. And the Congress also forgets that Government hits the Congress by hitting the Bengali Hindu as its foremost exponent."

Criticising the Communal Award, Dr. Mookerjee said: "Nowhere in the world is there any such spectacle of a minority being further weakened in the interests of the majority and of a majority being further strengthened at the cost of the minority. The result of it is that the Bengal Hindus, who form nearly 45 per cent of the population, will form only a third of the legislature, while their cultured classes will dwindle even to a fifth.

"This construction of a Constitution by mere counting of heads does not take into account the amount of the contributions which the Hindu minority of Bengal make to the general progress and prosperity of the province and towards the maintenance of the State itself.

"The statistics of Government show that nearly three-fourths of the revenue of Bengal is contributed by the Hindus whose cultural contributions will be evident from the fact that they contribute as much as 64 p. c. of literate population, more

than 80 per cent of the school-going population and about 87 p. c. of the legal, 80 per cent of the medical and 83 per cent of Banking, Insurance and Exchange business. "Should a community that has done so much for their country be forcibly ousted from its political life and Government? Should their Moslem brethren be a party to this glaring injustice which has been inflicted upon the Hindus like a bolt from the blue?

In this connection Dr. Mookerjee severely criticised the Congress attitude and said "The Congress now pretends to defeat communalism by the weapons of socialism and communism. Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers! And communism will long linger as a remote issue! In the meanwhile, the monster of communalism will devour the whole body-politic and disintegrate the State. There will be left no Indian nation but any number of warring communities.

"The fact is that the Congress is retreating from its ideals in fear of the Moslems who are in hot pursuit, and has at last taken refuge under the shelter of a lofty and cosmopolitan indifference to the Communal Award to which the Moslems are not indifferent. Both Congress and Government are out to placate Moslems and bidding for their favour. The Government has beaten hollow the Congress and weaned from it its Moslem members. The pursuit by the Congress of the phantom of Hindu-Moslem unity has been defeated by a strong Anglo-Moslem unity which is expressed and embodied in the new Constitution. The Constitution is based on distrust of the Hindus and Congress.

"And so, after fifty years of all their sacrifice, suffering, and service for their country, the Bengali Hindus, who founded the Congress and have done so much for it, must now be sad to think to what political plight they have been reduced by the Congress to whom they had so long blindly trusted for achieving their political emancipation! It is a grim irony that the Congress that first worked with faith in constitutional activity and agitation, then gave it up as mendicant politics, dabbled in direct action and non-co-operation in a spirit of idealism, then gave them up as impracticable, is now returning with vengeance to the very paths and methods of liberal, moderate, and mendicant politics which it had condemned so violently and is now organising with feverish enthusiasm the elections to the legislature under a Constitution which is universally condemned in every particular! The pity is that, in the meanwhile in Bengal, the Congress will find that it has hardly a place to fill in the legislature. This is the rich harvest it will reap after all its labours through these long years!

How can Hindu Bengal take further risks under such indifferent leadership?—asked the President and opined that the Bengal Hindus must rebuild their shattered fortunes in their own way by their own organisations.

Asserting that the Hindus have never claimed separate electorates, Dr. Mookerjee said: "But if separate electorate and representation is to be the order of the day, the Hindus do not fight shy of such separation if the Moslems insist on it. But they object to half-measures of separation which are not good for either community.

"As I have already stated, separate electorate and separate representation are dictated by a sense of separate nationality. Separate electorate and separate representation do not go with a joint purse. If communities must separate at elections, and also in legislation and administration, they should separate with their purses too.

"Let the Hindus and Moslems frankly organise themselves as separate nationalities from top to bottom, each fostering its own national culture by its own resources, and then let them unite in an All-Bengal Federal Assembly. The federal idea and not that of a Unitary State will suit Bengal better in the present state of separation between the Hindus and Moslems.

"It is also very necessary in the interests of both Hindu and Moslem cultures that there should be first a separation in education, as has been done in Canada, in the separate schools for the English and French. Both Hindu and Moslem cultures stand to gain from a separate treatment. The Moslems rightly object to much of Hindu Bengali literature as being repugnant to their state and tradition. Their children should be fed upon the literature of their own creation, which is more in consonance with their religious and racial ideals.

"Similarly, the Hindu youths need not be fed upon any compromising literature which will be devoid of life for them. Religion has been too much mixed up with politics in the coming Constitution. It should come with far greater fitness and profit into education. Both Hindus and Moslems have been suffering grievously from a godless education. The separate school system will be the only remedy.

Between the Hindu and the Moslem there cannot be any fusion of cultures, but there may be a federation of the two cultures in the higher grades of education. Still India has felt the need for a separate Hindu and Moslem university to the advantage of both. Our communal differences can only be solved on the basis of a more thorough-going scheme and not mere convenient half-measures of separation.

"In conclusion, I do hope and pray that the Hindu and Moslem will still be able to unite as national of the same State on the basis of a common citizenship on terms of equality and fraternity in every sphere of their common national life, with due regard for their separate cultural interests and recover for their common mother country its lost position of primacy among the provinces of India."

## The Bengal Hindus' Memorial

A largely-signed memorial of representative Bengal Hindus for a revision of the of the Communal Award, which was supported by a monster meeting at the Calcutta Town Hall on the 18th. July 1936 presided over by Poet *Rabindra Nath Tagore* and numerous meetings in districts, was sent to the Secretary of State for India. In this connection it may be stated that a canard was issued some time back in newspapers that the Secretary of State might be prevailed upon to revise the Communal Award so far as Bengal was concerned if a weighty and influential memorial was submitted to him.

In the course of his speech presiding over the meeting Poet Tagore said :— "The shadow of the dark age has fallen upon Europe. She seems bolsterously eager to put out the light and ideals which she herself specially brought to the new age and her newspapers to-day are full of malevolent measures taken by dictatorial powers against their victims to keep them crippled for good or thrust them completely aside. I shrink from comparing with some of those acts the introduction in our country of a scheme in which there will remain no scruple to wrench off one of the most sensitive roots of our growing national being."

"The incident", added Dr. Tagore, "will appear too small and passed over in silent apathy by the larger world, for those who are helplessly affected by it suffer from the cruelest insults—the insult of insignificance. However, for us the enormity is such that I felt ashamed to claim the privilege of old age and failing health and drawn out of my accustomed seclusion, cry my warning even if it be a cry in the wilderness."

"The Communal Award, carrying the malediction of separated political life, has been pronounced even upon groups of communities in our country that didn't want it. The Indian body politic is divided into eighteen different sections. Mahatma Gandhi described this process as vivisection of the body politic which emerges as a carcase out of this operation."

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore continued : "For reasons which need not be explained Hindus are handicapped most in the coming constitution and Bengal Hindus instead of receiving any protection, being in a minority, have specially been singled out for reduction in their representation even below their natural population strength by weightage being cast against them. Though a tacit compliment, it is an open assault employing novel political arithmetic invidious enough to turn the methods of responsible government into most irresponsible means by which one community is made permanently independent of the co-operation of the other while wielding the right to oppress it, if it so chooses."

"I beg to remind our rulers that even worse than the commercial exploitation of our economic life is this political poisoning of our national blood, worse than punishing subjects on suspicion without trial for an indefinite period, for it is punishing the future, an eternal damnation for acts of disobedience, real or imaginary, proved or unproved."

"Ever since the very suggestion of this proposal", proceeded Dr. Tagore, "the atmosphere of the Province became turbid with a passion menacing the amenities of civilised life. Already the spirit of wanton destructiveness seemed to be creeping

even in the commonwealth of literature. This is the first red signal of danger promising fatal collision between neighbouring communities whose duty it is to create a comprehensive life of common welfare.

"We, Hindus must not grudge the favoured partners of our destiny the sudden shower of gifts so long as it lasts", advised Dr. Tagore. "The 'only cause of anxiety lies in the sureness of reaction that will follow when saturation point is reached and yet satiety remains distant when indulgence, in an one-sided game, crosses the bounds of even automatic decency. The most ill-omened aspect of the problem which frightens us is when we realise the absurdity of bringing arguments to the present question, being perfectly certain that our rulers long-trained in parliamentary ethics know better than ourselves that communal division in a political organisation is fatal to its effectiveness." Meanwhile Dr. Tagore asked his Hindu brethren never to lose temper and aggravate injury into suicide. "It is not difference in opportunities which in itself is dangerous but the mental attitude created through it, an attitude of exultation on the one side that recklessly pushes its triumph with immediate impunity to ungenerous extremes and on the other side resentment and rankling seeking to find outlets often in a wrong manner and unreasonable excuses."

The Poet concluded, "I was born too early for this post-war age of disillusionment. I have had my moral sustenance from the much-maligned Victorian age, through its literature and its struggling faith in humanity, as it reached us across the sea. To-day when we find all through the West ruthless repression of freedom and that callously arrogant cynicism which is indifferent to widespread human misery and injustice, I still must, almost against all contrary evidence, place my confidence in the sensitiveness to the ideals of humanity which I considered as the characteristic trait of the western mind. And therefore when I grow, aware in our own neighbourhood of some far-reaching and deeply laid diplomatic move which means permanently holding paralysed in its meshes our future for the sake of a tighter grip upon our vitals, I still feel inclined to appeal to the chivalrous humanity of the Englishman representing the best ideals of western culture. I believe that if those ideals that show signs of dilapidation were restored once again and somehow brought to bear even upon Indian politics, if people that determine the fate of this country could win in our hearts the prestige of unswerving fairplay, it will not only add to the credit of their civilisation but to their worldly benefit in the long run. If those that have called this meeting had no such faith, conscious or unconscious in this race, then this meeting is foolish and devoid of meaning. I am sure, even though they may not clearly define it to themselves, they are certain that the higher stratum of English life does not solely constitute of persons like the late Premier who betrayed his often-pronounced ideals when they concerned India or some Viceroy, who cleverly navigated the White Paper boat into the stagnant water of unanimity and who must have inwardly chuckled at all our discomfitures and blunders of inexperience. If this pathetic faith which dies hard is an illusion, then let us leave this child's play of meetings and conferences and exclusively concentrate our attention to build our own history in unaided and dignified aloofness and in patient wisdom. Or even fall back upon the stolid indifference of the Oriental mind, indifference that unconsciously prepares the soil for unwelcome and unexpected calamity."

### Resolutions

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Conference :

"This Conference of the Hindus of Bengal whole-heartedly supports the memorial submitted on their behalf to the Secretary of State for a modification of the Communal Award, which is anti-National and undemocratic and wholly unjust to the Bengal Hindus, which curtails the existing rights and will operate as a punitive measure against them.

"This meeting requests the Secretary of State to take action under Section 308 (4) of the Government of India Act for purposes of redressing the wrongs inflicted on the Hindus of Bengal by the Communal Award and further submits that any assurance to the contrary such as that given by the Government of India in their communique of 2nd July 1935 cannot override a provision of the statute and thereby render it inoperative only where the Hindu minority is concerned.

"This meeting appoints a Committee with power to add to their number to take effective steps to secure the reversal of the Communal Award."

**Memorial Rejected by Secretary of State**

In the course of a letter to the Governor-General-in-Council, the Marquess of Zetland gave the following reason for rejecting the prayer :

"I made it abundantly clear that His Majesty's Government would not propose any alteration of the Communal Award under this section (Sec. 308 (6) of the Govt. of India Act, 1935) except with the assent of the communities affected."

After referring to his speech in the Lords, the State Secretary says : "There is, of course, no intention of departing from this undertaking of His Majesty's Government, and accordingly it would serve no useful purpose for the Government to re-discuss at this stage, the difficult issues raised in the memorial."

## The Sindh Hindu Conference

The session of the Sindh Hindu Conference was held at Sukkur on the 31st. December 1936 and 1st. January 1937, under the presidency of Bhai Paramanand. The following are excerpts from the presidential address :—

"The present is the time of peculiar political unrest in the country. We are in the midst of a great excitement on account of the elections to the provincial Assemblies being in full swing. As you know, the country is on the threshold of the introduction of a new system of Government. There are three different political parties in India and each of them looks upon this new system from a different point of view. One is the Congress party, the second, the Liberals and the third is the Hindu Sabha group.

"The Congress is evidently a movement for the attainment of freedom or self-government for the country, and taking it as such, the Congress should be above all parties. Such, indeed, is the position which the Congress once occupied in the imagination of the people, and its leaders even now assert that it still continues to occupy the same position. There is no doubt that on Mahatma Gandhi's coming into the field of action (whether his methods were right or wrong, is a different question), the Congress was raised to the level of a real national movement. He revolutionized the whole system of political agitation in this country. Before his appearance, however, it should be admitted that the Congress was a party of constitutional agitators aspiring for self-government in the country. A new constitution aiming at the establishment of a sort of responsible government for the country is now being introduced. The leaders of the Congress have now decided to go back to the old position and take part in the working of this constitution. It may be with the object of wrecking it that they want to enter the Assemblies.

"From this change of policy it is quite clear that the Congress is now completely departing from its principles of non-co-operation and civil disobedience. Thus with its determination of entering the legislatures and setting itself up against the other parties seeking entry therein, the Congress ceases to be a national movement and reduces itself to the position of a political party with a particular creed, based upon some peculiar political theories.

"Besides the Congress, as I have said above, the Liberal League and the Hindu Sabha are the other two parties. All these three are agreed on one thing as their final good. It is the attainment of complete responsible government for India. But as soon as we come to the discussion of the means of acquiring this, we at once enter upon a field of controversy. The Congress party even after its repeated failures still believes in adopting revolutionary methods ; the Liberals believe in the evolutionary process which is more clearly expressed in the term, responsive cooperation. According to the Hindu Sabha group, the strengthening and organizing of the Hindus is the first necessity for marching towards the common goal. Unity is strength. Hindu unification is the preliminary step towards Hindu-Muslim unity. Thus, according to this theory, shakti is real Swaraj.

"I have intentionally left out of account Mr. Jawaharlal's utopian theories as being altogether beyond the scope of practical politics. He and his followers seem to despise to look upon this earth and earthly questions in the spirit of practical politics. They are always soaring high in heavens and planning schemes which have no bearing on our present condition.

It has become a habit with us to blame the third party for every ill we meet within India. We never try to look within ourselves but always look outside and place every blame on others. We frequently hear it said that our subjection is due to foreign interference and wherever there is communal tension, we say that the third party is responsible for it. It is quite true that the foreign bureaucracy for its own stability follows the policy of divide and rule which has been recommended from very ancient times to be adopted by all Governments, whether native or foreign. As long as we stand divided and are weak, all our political ends are sure to fail. Now, therefore, the question is : How to combat this policy and remedy its evil effects. It is no use saying that this communal tangle will continue as long as we have a third party in the country, and in order to bring about communal unity we must first get rid of this third party. Such a view is born out of a confusion of ideas. This argument puts us in a vicious circle. As long as the communal tension continues, there can be no self-government and as long as the foreign Government continues there can be no unity. This kind of arrangement in a circle takes us nowhere. It may be true that foreigners do interfere in these affairs, but it is the lack of that character that allows this interference by foreigners.

The Congress from its start has set before itself Hindu-Muslim unity as its aim. It has tried every possible means to achieve that unity. It has tried to do so even at the cost of Hindus. It tried to bribe the Muslims in innumerable ways and went to the extent of offering them blank cheques. It became ready to give up our national name Hindu, to give up the national language Hindi and even to give away all our traditions and our national history and our literature in order to bring the Muslim community to its side. The efforts of the Congress have met with complete disappointment and utter failure and now instead of Hindu-Muslim unity we are face to face with Anglo-Muslim alliance and the isolation of the Hindus. Why is that so ? Simply because the Congress adopted an utterly wrong policy and followed utterly wrong methods. The true remedy lay in a quite different direction. The unification of the Hindus was the first step and the only right course to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. The Muslims would have been tempted to join the Hindus if they had seen the Hindus themselves united and strong. Otherwise, with whom were they to unite ? How could they unite with Congressmen who themselves were non-Hindus. Hindu *sangathan*, therefore, is the *sine quo non* of Hindu-Muslim unity.

'We blame the Government for introducing separate electorates in this country. It may be true that the Government induced the Muslims and even the depressed classes to demand separate electorates. I come to the same view again that if the leaders of the Muslims or those of the depressed classes had possessed sufficient intelligence and strong national character they would have stood against this temptation and the Government would have no excuse or reason to introduce separate representations. The Congress instead of directing its every effort to the creation of real national character, was trying to undermine that character by offering special privileges as a price for unity.

'Is, therefore, the Government alone to be blamed for this evil ? The Congress is no less liable to this blame. Thus when the Congress offered to accept Muslim demands as bribe to get the Muslims on its side, the Government too offered them higher bribes and as the gift of special privileges was in the hands of the Government the Muslim leaders entered into a pact with the Government.

'I have said that the Congress is responsible to a great degree for the introduction of separate electorates. The Congress agreed to it in the Lucknow Pact and in the Nehru Report and even at the Round Table Conference in London and when his Majesty's Government gave its Communal Decision perpetuating this evil in the new constitution, the Congress, instead of opposing it, adopted a policy of neutrality.

'As separate electorates for different communities are indirectly a creation of the Congress, the Congress claiming to represent Hindus, Muslims and others, has got absolutely no right to interfere in the election of the Hindus as long as the Communal Decision and the separate electorates remain. Their plea of capturing the legislatures so as to stop the reactionaries from using these legislatures for bad purpose, has no legs to stand on. Other parties may have differences with the Congress but that does not mean that the Hindu Sabha or the Liberal Party would propose and support such candidates whose success would be harmful to the interests of the country. The Congress, on the other hand, used to preach boycott of Councils as the foundation of non-cooperation. They should either confess in plain words that they have given up their non-cooperation altogether or they should only render their sup-

port to such men as, in their view, would not go against the interests of the country but in no case make the capturing of legislatures as the chief plank of their own.

The Congress theory is that they are sending Congressmen into the legislatures for wrecking the constitution and for setting up a constituent Assembly for preparing a new constitution for India. The past experience of the Congress as well as all reason goes against this theory. The Swaraj Party was formed with a similar object. The late Deshbandhu Das, a great leader and a great lawyer, asserted that there would be Swaraj as soon as dyarchy was ended. By some means he succeeded in obstructing dyarchy but even then no Swaraj came. Again we cannot overlook the fact that there exists a provision in the constitution itself that in case the opposition party succeeded in preventing the machinery of the constitution to work, the Governor will be quite competent to keep it going. The late Pandit Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Swaraj Party, made this experiment in the course of the two Assemblies and at the Lahore session of the Congress in 1930 he confessed that their experiment had failed and they had not been able to take their country even one inch towards Swaraj. They simply blundered in wasting their energy for six years.

However, my chief objection to this theory stands on another ground. Even admitting that in some provinces in which the Hindus are in a majority and in which the Congress could get a majority in legislatures, the Congress Party might do something to tackle with the constitution, I fail to understand how the Congress party could even think of making any such attempt in provinces, where the Hindus are in a minority and in which the number of Congress members can in no case exceed one-fifth of the total number of members. And if it is to be acknowledged that they would be simply helpless in such a legislature, why should the Congress Parliamentary Board create a serious split among the Hindus in these provinces and make them incur an expenditure of thousands and lakhs only to gratify the whims of the Congress party? Now, another experiment is before us. The Congress party by means of its bluffing, succeeded in capturing all the Hindu seats in the Central Assembly, but what has it done? Have they succeeded in fulfilling any of the promises made to the people? I say none. Their work in the Assembly is very much the same as that of the other parties in the last Assembly. Some of the Congress members made loud speeches and a section of the press applauded their work by saying that they had defeated the Government so many many times but it should be remembered that similar speeches were made in the previous Assemblies and similar defeats inflicted on the Government, and the Government in spite of these speeches and defeats, went on as merrily as before. There was not the least symptom of wrecking the constitution.

'Another point: The Congressmen are supposed to be Satyagrahis. How does it conform to their conscience to take an oath of loyalty to the Crown and promise to discharge faithfully their duties while at the same time keep a mental reservation that they would do their utmost to wreck the constitution?

'If the Congress has no right to run elections on behalf of the Hindus, who has that right? It is the Hindu Mahasabha. The real objection to this view is that Hindu Mahasabha is a communal body. It has, therefore, no right to enter into the political field. My answer is that Hindu Mahasabha likes its stand on a truly national basis. It appears to be a communal body simply because it fights and opposes communalism which the Congress cannot. The Muslims want to push and promote their communal interests even at the cost of those of other communities. This is clearly indicated in their approval of the Communal Decision and the Government of India's order for distributing public services on communal lines. This policy on the part of the Muslims can work to the great injury of the Hindu interest. Therefore, as long as this communal constitution continues, the Hindus have got a duty to perform and it is to safeguard the Hindu interests. The basis of the legislatures being community-wise no non-communal organisation can serve the country's interests at the same time keeping a watch over the interests of the various communities and as the interests of the Hindus are at stake the Hindu Sabha alone has the right to run Hindu elections.

After sketching in brief the growth and development of the Hindu Maha Sabha since its inception at Lahore in 1908 up to the present, the president concluded his address saying, 'United you stand, divided you fall. Be loyal to the Hindu cause. Your loyalty and love for your nation alone can keep you united. Make your self-interest subordinate to the common good of your people. That is the only road to national life and prosperity.'



# The Bihar United Muslim Conference

The first session of the Bihar United Muslim Conference was held at Patna on the 3rd October 1936 under the Presidency of *Khan Bahadur Nawab S. M. Ismail* and was attended by a large number of delegates from all over the province.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

*Mr. S. Ibrahim Hussain*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in his address said that the Bihar United Muslim party originated in an informal meeting on July 29, 1936, at the residence of the hon. Mr. S. A. Aziz, Minister of Education, Bihar, who was the sponsor of the party. The object of the meeting was to organize Muslim opinion in Bihar with a view to forming a strong organization and work the new constitution in the interests of the community. This decision was arrived at the meeting and the party was the result of efforts directed to that end. Proceeding, he said that Muslims in Bihar were politically backward, due to communal differences and due to their own neglect in achieving progress and it was time that they took steps to remedy their drawbacks.

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

In the course of his presidential address *Nawab S. M. Ismail* said :—

'The political condition that affects the Mussalmans of India in general and this province in particular bristles with problems of much gravity. It is, therefore, all the more greatly to be recognized that the exceptional circumstances under which we are placed to-day on the eve of the approaching constitutional changes requires mature guidance and single-minded devotion in the best interest of the Mussalmans.'

Proceeding, the president said, 'I am afraid that in this province where there was need for greater unity there is greater disunity both on alleged principle and also without any definite principle. I hope and trust that before long and after the result of electioneering all our differences will sink and be buried as soon as we enter the provincial Legislative Chamber. I may be optimistic, but I have reason to believe in the good sense of my community that their wide vision will prevail over all the petty differences and narrow-mindedness which is at present clouding, and that once for all they will work for what it is worth, and in spite of all its shortcomings, the future constitution in the best interest of the country and community. After the inauguration of the new reforms, as the centre of our activities shall be mostly confined to the needs of our provinces, our energy and attention shall be concentrated to the provincial sphere only, as we cannot usurp an All-India function.'

Every possible effort for the fusion of the different parties had been made, but it was unfortunate that no agreed formula could be solved, said the speaker. He appealed to the audience to consolidate themselves and discharge their responsibilities in the true spirit of partisanship and with discipline. No doubt there are two Muslim organizations of an all-India character, namely, the all-India Muslim League, started in 1906, and the all-India Muslim Conference started in 1929. But so far as Bihar is concerned none of these organizations can claim to have appreciably achieved any success. Therefore, a provincial organization with provincial requirement based on the sanction of the provincial Muslim masses is really the need of the day. Hence the United Muslim Party came into being. Now what is required is effective, systematic and regular working so as to achieve success. Never there had been greater need for unity of purpose among the Muslims than it is to-day.

Continuing, the speaker said that the fate of the Mussalmans was at a risk and that every attempt was being made by those who were better organised and disciplined to encroach upon the rights and privileges of the Muslims. It was the legitimate concern of every community in the country to safeguard their own interest marching at the same time with members of the majority community. The Mussalmans were prepared to cooperate in the working of the constitution with those of the majority community who were prepared to work it in spite of its shortcomings. He appealed to the audience not to be led away by catchwords like 'independence' and 'independent' as the meaning of the words was vague. He deplored that Muslims in Bihar were divided into four com-

partments for the purpose of running the elections and that there was room only for one Muslim party in the province. 'I was all along and shall be for one United party and I hope there shall be yet the chance of a future union and fusion as the result of electioneering.'

The main object of the United party, said the President, was its success at the poll. The time had arrived for them to join hands without losing their individuality or forsaking their distinctive plan of work, for the benefit of the country and to form parties in the legislature to work the Reforms which would not be possible without an understanding and settlement on a provincial basis of communal questions when the elections would be over. The allegiance of the Muslim to the future Government would be of a very different character from what it used to be. Although the constitution allowed a low percentage of responsibility, still it was capable of modifications and improvements and that could be done by their giving a definite proof of the method by which it could be utilized to the best interest of the country and the community.

'The magnitude of the task, though tried to be ridiculed by destructive forces, is by no means such as to be rejected, but it certainly is a distinct step forward in the direction of further responsibilities and such an element of real responsibility as has been introduced gives sufficient scope for working and which, if properly worked out by all shades of thought and opinion in the community and in the legislature in the spirit of cooperation and constructive statesmanship, is certainly capable of making the power of interference given to the Governor a dead letter never to be utilized and ultimately to disappear from the statute book. But no gain would accrue by following a policy of negation and sterility.'

Referring to the Communal Award, the speaker said that he was pained at the 'persistent attitude of the majority and of all their organisations which is of hostility towards the Communal Award in the garb of so-called nationalism.' Continuing, the speaker said that the constitution of the United Muslim party was such that no individual or group of individuals could dominate the party until they had the support of Muslim conscientiousness. All members of the party must undertake to accept the decision of the majority.

'Our most vital and immediate concern shall be to establish for the purpose of running and selecting candidates a small board consisting of five or six members on whom the majority of members shall have confidence. The speaker also urged economy in the expenditure at elections. The party system is more western than eastern and as such the inspiring example of the English party system is healthy and helpful to imitate'.

## The Bihar Muslim Independent Party Conference

The first session of the Bihar Muslim Independent Party Conference was held at Patna on the 12th. September 1936 under the presidency of *Maulana Ahmed Sayed*, Secretary of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-Hind. In the course of his speech, the Maulana said that their chief objectives were independence of the country, safeguarding their religion and a form of Government based on their religious tenets.

The Maulana addressed the conference for nearly two hours which was attended by about 200 delegates from various parts of the province and dwelt on various aspects of the political situation in India.

Proceeding, he said that under present day conditions no nation in the world would willingly be under the subjugation of another and that freedom and independence were natural impulses in man. He accused the Government of not standing by its pledges and said that India was invited to attend the Round Table Conference like a dishonest debtor inviting a creditor to put off the payment of his dues by false promises. There were several things which must not be dominated by foreigners, among them being their culture, religion, education, the Army in India and income and expenditure.

Referring to the Communal Award, the speaker said that it was the emblem of India's misfortune and that it was more against the Moslems than the Hindus. He wondered at those people who were willing to appoint Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as the arbitrator of their destiny and grumbled against their lot when it had been decided. Agitation against the Award, he said, was fraught with grave consequences and would never be conducive to the good of the masses. In fact, opposition of the Award amounted to opposition of the freedom of the country.

Coming to the elections and the legislatures, he said that Government would have not nominated representatives of their own at legislative bodies, which would constitute only of those who would be elected by them (Indians). He would not like any one to go to the Assemblies on their vote and work on behalf of Government. Under the new constitution the Governor-General and the Governors had unbounded power and they would try their utmost to give cause to the Governors to exercise their special powers very often, even to compel them to do so, and to break up the legislatures and transfer all power to their (Governors') own hands. They would also like to elect only those members to the legislatures who would uphold their religious cause, and work in consultation with the Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the Imarat Shariat. These were all that the Independent Party stood for.

The speaker also referred to the situation in Palestine and complained against Government's attitude in regard to it.

The Independent Party was at one with the Congress so far as its goal of independence was concerned and would work shoulder to shoulder with it for the cause of the country, but it would also be the endeavour of the Party to secure from the Congress a guarantee that Moslem religion and culture be preserved and protected in the future constitution of India, said the Chairman of the Reception Committee in his address. The Party stood for the emancipation of the poor and uplift of the agriculturists.

## The C. P. Muslim Political Conference

The Central Provinces Muslim Political Conference was held at Nagpur on the 24th. October 1936 under the presidency of *Maulana Shaukat Ali*.

### WELCOME ADDRESS

Mr. M. Y. Shariff, welcoming the delegates, said that so long as separate electorates continued, it was necessary for Muslims to form their own party and send true representatives to the Legislature to safeguard their rights. They must take advantage of the new constitution and its benefits and carry on the fight to win their just rights.

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

In the course of his presidential address, *Maulana Shaukat Ali* said:—"Let the Hindu majority and Muslim minority ponder well and realise the fact that they would not advance one step unless they come to an honourable understanding.

Mr. Shaukat Ali said he was shocked at the Bombay riots and asked what good they expected (both Hindus and Muslims) from this unfortunate affair. He wanted to remind Hindus that self-governing India was impossible if the majority had not the goodwill and co-operation of the minorities and if Hindus (the majority community) were not prepared to concede Muslim demands. The Congress scored successes in the Assembly because of Muslim co-operation, which showed that they could achieve their common goal if they worked together in a friendly spirit.

The speaker exhorted the Muslims of the province to unite under the banner of the Muslim League and their leader, Mr. M. A. Jinnah. Referring to the ensuing elections, he stressed the need for sending honest representatives of Muslims to the Legislatures who would be amenable to the discipline of the League and said that with the co-operation of other progressive groups they must work the new constitution to the best of their ability in order to prove their capacity for administration and then demand the fullest power to govern their country.

Mr. Shaukat Ali criticised the tendency of Muslim youths to deprecate the work of their elders and advised them to be brave and strong and to face the task ahead. Nearly five lakhs of Muslims, he said, had been given 14 seats in the O. P. Legislative Assembly. This representation was meagre and inadequate. But they need not be depressed. They must choose true spokesmen and work undivided for their rights.

Mr. Shaukat Ali wished that Government officers would not interfere in elections. "I confidently predict that the Congress will come out triumphant in the general constituencies during the forthcoming elections," said Maulana Shaukat Ali.

Proceeding, the Maulana said that Mr. Bhulabhai Desai had done well in recently declaring that a large majority of the Muslims always supported the Congress in the Assembly. The Muslims yielded to none, he said, in their fervour for nationalism and he had no doubt that the Muslims, in co-operation with the progressive groups, would strive for the good of the people.

He also denounced the attempts of a certain section of the Anglo-Indian Press to exploit the Bombay riots and deliver sermons to the Hindus and the Muslims and advocate a continuance of British rule in India.

## 2nd. Day's Proceedings—Nagpur—25th. October 1936

### WALK OUT OF DELEGATES

Frequent interruptions and angry exchanges of words were a feature of to-day's session of the Conference.

Several delegates questioned the rulings of the Chair. The audience stood up at least on a dozen occasions. The President, intervening at one stage, appealed for peaceful and orderly behaviour if they were really keen on carrying on the work of the Muslim League in the province. This had the desired effect. Further discussions were conducted in a peaceful manner.

A provincial branch of the Muslim League was formed with Mr. Shariff as President and Mr. Abdul Razaq as General Secretary.

After the meeting had signified its approval of the office-bearers, one member, Mr. Syed Yasin (Hinganghat), objected to the names approved when the Chair declined permission to the speaker to proceed on the ground that the matter could not be reopened.

Thereupon, 50 delegates walked out of the pandal as a protest and held a meeting close to the Conference pandal and passed a resolution of no-confidence in Mr. Shaukat Ali and threatened to form a separate party, independent of the League Branch, in the Province.

The Conference, which adopted the League constitution, elected 50 members to the Provincial Council of the League. The Conference then concluded.

### BEGUM MOHAMED ALI'S APPEAL

A fervent appeal for unification of Muslim ranks at this juncture was made by Begum Mahomed ali, who was present at the last night's session of the Muslim Conference. She said that she was pained to hear that their ranks were divided in two different groups and asked what they hoped to achieve by harping on points of differences rather than agreement. "Realise you are all Muslims," she said, "You are Muslims first and last." The conference had assembled to promote the welfare of the community as a whole. How could they hope to work with ether parties for the welfare of the country when they themselves could not speak with one voice ?

## The Andhra Provincial Harijan Conference

The ninth session of the Andhra Provincial Harijan Conference opened at Vizianagaram on the 21st. October 1934 under the presidency of Mr. V. Kurmayya, one of the leaders of the community.

Mr. M. V. Bhagya Reddi Varma (Hyderabad), opening the Conference said that the first session of the Panchama (Harijan) Conference was held at Beswada in the year 1917 and that since then much water had flowed under the bridge. The salvation of the community lay in their hands. They should cultivate a spirit of mutual help and co-operation before they could hope to gain their objective.

Mr. D. Sadananda Rao (Bimlipatam), Chairman of the Reception Committee, next read the address of welcome. They had to confer, he said, at a most propitious time inasmuch as the leaders of public opinion in the country were busily engaged in forging policies and programmes which they proposed to carry out in the event of their being returned to the legislatures in the ensuing elections. Some leaders of the Harijan community, he stated, affiliated themselves with a powerful party more for self-aggrandisement than for promoting the interests of the community which they represented. In these circumstances, it behoved the community to exercise discrimination in electing the right kind of candidates to the legislatures, persons who were inspired by genuine feelings of patriotism and real sympathy for their community.

Mr. V. Kurmayya then delivered his address which covered more or less the whole range of problems affecting the Harijans. The community, he said, had succeeded in securing a legitimate quota of rights in local and municipal bodies and stressed the fact that no useful purpose would be served rechristening the caste-Hindus. Adverting to untouchability, he affirmed that scholars differed in their interpretation of texts relating to untouchability. The position taken up by Mahatma Gandhi was the only logical one. It would take time to uproot the stigma of untouchability which in villages, if not in towns, was working irreparable mischief and was widening the gulf between Harijans and caste-Hindus. There was a time, however, when the community elicited respect from the castes for the reason that Arundhati and Hanuman were born among their community, not to speak of saints and Rishis like Nanda, Vali, Jambavanta, Sugriva, Vyasa and Parasa. The caste-Hindus were mainly responsible for the deplorable condition in which the community found itself at present. It would be no sacrilege if those Sastras which enforced untouchability were relegated to the limbo of oblivion.

Adequate provision for education of the community, he complained, had not been made by the State. The sum of four lakhs allotted to be spent on education of the community by the Labour Commissioner was quite inadequate and disappointing. India being agricultural country, it was the duty of the Government to establish more institutes where knowledge of extensive and intensive cultivation of agriculture might be imparted. He held that 'actual cultivators' should be in complete possession of land. Only then, he believed the strained relation which subsisted between the landlord and the tenant for generations would be completely obliterated. The speaker also pleaded for facilities of vocational education, such as spinning, weaving etc., which would mitigate the acuteness of unemployment, and go a long way in solving the economic problem of the community.

Proceeding, Mr. Kurmayya declared that Government should employ more educated Harijans in the services and the age-limit imposed on them for higher jobs should be made away with in the interests of the community. A statutory provision should be made that no less than 17 per cent of the jobs should be assigned to educated members of the community. More facilities should be afforded for larger employment in local bodies and municipalities.

Alluding to conversion of Harijans, he said, that if the Harijans left the fold of Hinduism, the responsibility rested on the shoulders of the so-called high caste-Hindus.

After referring in grateful terms to the Poona Pact, the President spoke on the advisability or otherwise of affiliating themselves with any of the three political parties in the Presidency. He was of opinion, as Mahatmaji was, that they should stand on their own legs, or identify themselves with the Congress Party, provided the All-India Congress Parliamentary Board came forward to satisfy the conditions imposed by the leaders of the community.

He exhorted them to cast their votes for sincere, patriotic individuals, who were prepared to sacrifice themselves for the general good of all. The first day's proceedings then ended.

### Resolutions—Second Day—22nd. October 1936

A resolution condoling the demise of King George V and assuring loyalty to the British Throne was passed. Condolences were expressed at the demise of Srimati Kamala Nehru and Srimati G. Mangayamma (Adi-Andhra).

The second resolution declared the readiness of Harijans to abandon the fold of Hinduism only when they were driven to desperate straits and when their honour and sense of self-respect were compromised.

The Conference requested the Government to allot by nomination eight seats to Harijans in the Legislative Council on the principle of proportional representation and to nominate at least four Harijans from the Andhradesa; employ more educated Harijans in local bodies and municipalities and to enforce the rules of the Public Service Commission in regard to appointment of Harijans.

The Conference changed the name of the provincial organisation from 'Andhra Provincial Nimmajatiya Mahasabha' to 'Andhra Provincial Adi-Andhra Sangham.'

It was decided to start in Andhradesa Taluk and District Sanghams and affiliate them to the Provincial Sangham.

It was urged that in view of the fact that in almost all districts Labour Departments had been established for the purpose of ameliorating the economic condition of Harijans, a similar department be started in the district of Vizagapatam also.

The Working Committee of the Provincial Harijan Board was empowered to nominate candidates for election to the legislatures.

The Labour Department was requested to remove the age restriction imposed on Harijans aspiring for residential scholarships. The Conference requested the Government to nominate educated Harijans as members of the District Economic Councils and urged them to start in every district one institute for imparting instruction in agriculture and one institute for vocational training. The Conference then came to a close.

## The Moonjee—Ambedkar Correspondence

### Re. Conversion of Depressed Classes

Dr. Ambedkar's views on the relative advantages to the Depressed Classes by embracing one religion or the other, the formula agreed upon between Dr. Ambedkar and Dr. B. S. Moonje, Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah's disagreement with the formula and endorsement of Mr. Rajah's views by Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Malaviya and Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar are disclosed in the following correspondence released to the press for publication.

#### Dr. Moonjee's Letter to Mr. Rajah

Dr. Moonje wrote the following letter dated New Delhi, 30th June 1936 to Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah:—

On urgent calls from Bombay friends and also from Sreeman Seth Jugal Kishore Birla with the concurrence of Dr. Ambedkar, I had occasion to go to Bombay on the 18th instant. There Dr. Ambedkar had long conversations with me for three days. Eventually a formula for amicable settlement of his revolt against Hinduism was drafted. Dr. Ambedkar entirely agrees with it. The formula is as follows:—

If Dr. Ambedkar were to announce his decision that he and his followers are prepared to embrace Sikhism in preference to Islam and Christianity and that he shall honestly and sincerely co-operate with the Hindus and the Sikhs in propagating their culture and in counteracting the Moslem movement for drawing the Depressed Classes into the Moslem fold, the Hindu Mahasabha will be prepared, in view of their having agreed to remain within the Hindu culture, to make an announcement that it will not object:—

1. To the conversion of the Depressed Classes to Sikhism;
2. To the inclusion of the neo-Sikhs in the list of the Scheduled Castes; and

3. To the enjoyment by the Depressed Classes of the Political Rights of the Poona Pact by free competition between the Non-Sikh and the Neo-Sikh Depressed Classes as provided for under the Poona Pact.

From Bombay I have come here just this morning for consultation on it with formally putting it before friends and before the Hindu Mahasabha for its consideration. I am trying to see Pandit Malaviyaji, and if possible also H. H. the Maharaja of Patiala. It is a very delicate matter. I have therefore to request you to kindly think over and let me have your opinion in the matter. Until we decide one way or the other, the matter will be kept strictly private and confidential.

I am enclosing also a copy of the statement of his case handed over to me by Dr. Ambedkar for your perusal. Please let me have your reply to my Nagpur address.

#### Dr. Ambedkar's Statement

*Dr. Ambedkar's statement referred to in Dr. Moonje's letter read as follows :*

"The Hindus cannot afford to be indifferent to the movement of conversion which is gaining ground among the Depressed Classes. It would undoubtedly be the best thing from the standpoint of the Hindus if the Depressed Classes were to be persuaded to drop the idea of conversion. But if that is not possible then the Hindus must concern themselves with the next move which the Depressed Classes will take, because their move is bound to have serious consequences upon the destiny of the Hindus and the destiny of the country. If they cannot be persuaded to stay, the Hindus must help if they cannot lead them to embrace a faith which will be least harmful to the Hindus and to the country.

It seems very unlikely that the Depressed Classes will formulate a new religion. Most probably they will embrace one of the existing faiths. At any rate, the Hindus can well proceed on that assumption. The first question is what is the faith that the Depressed Classes are likely to embrace? Obviously the one most advantageous to them.

There are three faiths from among which the Depressed Classes can choose. (1) Islam, (2) Christianity, and (3) Sikhism. Comparing these three, Islam seems to give the Depressed Classes all that they need. Financially the resources behind Islam are boundless. Socially the Mohammedans are spread all over India. There are Mohammedans in every Province and they can take care of the new converts from the Depressed Classes and render them all help. Politically the Depressed Classes will get all the rights which Mohammedans are entitled to. Conversion to Islam does not involve loss to such political rights as the right to special representation in the Legislature, right to services, etc.

Christianity seems equally attractive. If Indian Christians are too small numerically to provide the financial resources necessary for the conversion of the Depressed Classes, the Christian countries such as America and England will pour their immense resources if the Depressed Classes show their readiness to embrace Christianity. Socially, the Christian Community is numerically too weak to render much support to the converts from the Depressed Classes, but Christianity has Government behind it. Politically, Christianity will give them the same rights which Islam gives. Like the Muslims, Indian Christians are also recognised by the Constitution for special representation in the Legislatures and in the services.

Compared to Christianity and Islam, Sikhism has few attractions. Being a small community of 40 lakhs, the Sikhs cannot provide the finance. Socially, they cannot be of much help to the Depressed Classes. They are confined to the Punjab, and as for the majority of the Depressed Classes the Sikhs can give them no social support. Politically, Sikhism is at a positive disadvantage as compared with Islam or Christianity. Outside the Punjab, Sikhs are not recognized for special representation in the Legislature and in the services.

The second question is, looking at these three alternative faiths purely from the standpoint of the Hindus, which is the best,—Islam, Christianity or Sikhism? Obviously Sikhism is the best. If the Depressed Classes join Islam or Christianity they not only go out of the Hindu religion, but they also go out of the Hindu culture. On the other hand, if they become Sikhs they remain within the Hindu culture. This is by no means a small advantage to the Hindus.

What the consequences of conversion will be to the country as a whole is well worth bearing in mind. Conversion to Islam or Christianity will denationalise the Depressed Classes. If they go to Islam the number of Muslims will be doubled and the danger of Muslim domination also becomes real. If they go to Christianity, the

numerical strength of Christians becomes 5 to 6-crores. It will help to strengthen the hold of the British on this country. On the other hand, if they embrace Sikhism they will not only not harm the destiny of the country, but they will help the destiny of the country. They will not be denationalised. On the contrary, they will be a help in the political advancement of the country. Thus it is in the interest of the country that the Depressed Classes if they are to change their faith should go over to Sikhism.

The third question is if it is in the interest of the Hindus that the Depressed Classes should go over to Sikhism, are the Hindus prepared to make Sikhism as good an alternative to the Depressed Classes as Islam or Christianity is? If they are, then obviously they must try to remove the difficulties which lie in the way of Sikhism as compared with Islam and Christianity. The deficiencies are financial, social and political. The Hindus cannot help Sikhs to remove the social difficulty. But they can certainly help the Sikhs to remove the financial and political difficulties. Of these, it is most urgent to remove the political difficulty, because it might become an obstacle in the way of the Sikhs.

The solution of the political difficulty is fortunately a very small matter. All that is necessary is to add to the list of Scheduled Castes in each Province other than the Punjab the word "Sikh" as that of a person from the Depressed Classes who becomes a convert to Sikhism will not lose his political rights he would have had if he had remained a Depressed Class. Under the Communal Award, communities have been given the liberty to agree to any change in the Award and the Government has bound itself to alter the Award in accordance with the agreement.

This change can, therefore, easily be brought about if the Hindus so desire by mutual agreement with the Depressed Classes. This does not involve any radical change in the Poona Pact. It does not require any apportionment of seats. The seats, assigned to the Depressed Classes under the Poona Pact will remain the same. The only change that will be introduced is that non-Sikh Depressed Classes and the Depressed Classes who have gone to Sikhism will both be free to compete. It merely removes a disability from the Depressed Classes who become Sikh.

Those Hindus who might oppose this suggestion must answer the following questions :—

1. The seats assigned to the depressed class under the Poona Pact cannot come back to the Hindus. They will go to the Muslims or Christians if the depressed classes become Muslims or Christians because if by conversion of the depressed classes the population of Muslims or Christians increases, then the Muslims and Christians are bound to ask for increased representation in the Legislatures. Thus, if these seats are to go why not allow these seats to the Sikhs?
2. If under the constitution the D. C. cannot lose his political rights by becoming a Muslim or Christian, why should a D. C. on becoming a Sikh be made to lose his political rights? This is placing a premium on conversion to Islam and Christianity and a penalty on conversion to Sikhism. This is driving the D. C. to the Muslim and Christian folds. Is it in the interests of the Hindus to allow this to be so?
3. It may be that the D. C. will not lose their political rights by becoming converts to Sikhism because even under the Poona Pact the Scheduled Castes Order-in-Council their right to special representation is not made dependent upon their professing the Hindu religion. Their representation is made dependent upon their being members of certain castes or tribes. But why give the Sikhs cause for complaint and create bad blood against the Hindus?
4. The proposal to add Sikhs to the list of Scheduled Castes in the different provinces for political recognition cannot be said to be a strange proposal. On the other hand, not to give such a recognition would appear queer. If Sikhs in the Punjab can be recognised for political purposes why should Sikhs in other provinces be not so recognised? If the D. C. of the Punjab cannot lose their rights on becoming Sikhs, why should the fate of the D. C. in other provinces on becoming Sikhs be made different?

#### Mr. Raj's Reply to Dr. Moonjee

I have already expressed my view about Dr. Ambedkar's proposal that the Depressed Classes should give up Hinduism and embrace some other religion. I make a distinction between conversion—which is a spiritual change—and migration from one community to another for social, economic and political reasons.



Dear Dr. Moonje, you will excuse my saying that you view the whole problem of the depressed classes, in view of Dr. Ambedkar's proposal, as one of the communal migration and not as a religious problem. One would expect the President of the Hindu Mahasabha to view it as a religious problem; and not merely as a political problem, without even looking at it as a social and economic problem. One can understand your concern if as President of the Hindu Mahasabha you placed the spiritual welfare of the Depressed Classes first and foremost and thought of the social and economic welfare next and lastly thought of them as a political factor. Your solicitude for the place of the Depressed Classes in the political scheme not only exposes the interstitial nature of your concern for these classes, but is like placing the cart before the horse. One would expect you as President of the Hindu Mahasabha to ameliorate the social condition of the Depressed Classes by removing civic and social disabilities of these classes, not to speak of securing for them the right of worship in Hindu temples on an equal footing with other worshippers, and to further the Harijan movement started by Gandhiji all over the country. Instead of doing this, what is it that you are doing? You are dissecting the Depressed Classes and affiliating them religiously to the Sikhs while retaining them politically as Hindus.

The whole thing seems to me not to be conceived in the interest of the Depressed Classes, but on the other hand to be planned in the communal interests of the Hindus and the Sikhs. We are no sheep and cattle to be bartered away in this fashion driven from one political fold to another as a result of a bargain between the leaders of different communities. We want to remain as solid community moving of our own accord in the direction of progress and this we can best do by not throwing away our birth rights as Hindus but by remaining within Hinduism and changing it so as to make it more comfortable not only to our community but to other Hindu communities which are suffering from similar liabilities though our hardships are greater and more palpable. It is not our purpose to weaken the Hindu community but to strengthen it by reforming it from within. We do not wish to be pawns in the game of communal conflicts and competition.

Your proposal involves of electoral fortunes of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. If you want us to shift religion from the Hindu fold, we shall have to choose religion between the Sikhs and the Muslims, who are the bidders for our communal migration, wrongly called conversion. Why should we antagonise and stand arrayed against Muslims? They are our brothers as much as the Sikhs and the Hindus. If the depressed classes are all to become Sikhs and call themselves Neo-Sikhs, it will create all over India a Sikh-Hindu Moslem problem as in the Punjab made more complicated by the fact that the so-called Neo-Sikh belongs to the Depressed Class even among Sikhs.

This question of conversion or the communal migration as a move of the political chess-board does not disturb us much in South India. We are content to work under the Poona Pact, partly as a separate electorate and partly with a joint electorate preserving our status with the Hindus both religiously and politically. I would therefore be no party even to the political manipulations which are proposed in your letter. I would urge the Hindu Mahasabha to address itself to the task of making it easy for the Depressed Classes to stay within Hinduism and Hindu society instead of arranging for the ticket for entraining them to some far off destination. As the question you raise is likely to rouse a lot of discussion I reserve to myself the right to publish my reply when the occasion arises.

#### Mahatma Gandhi's Views

Mahatma Gandhi's letter to Mr. Raja dated 26th July 1936 :

"I have no difficulty about giving general endorsement to your letter to Dr. Moonje. I do not at all understand Dr. Moonje's or Dr. Ambedkar's position. For me removal of untouchability stands on a footing all its own. It is to me a deeply religious question. The very existence of our religion depends on its voluntary removal by Savarna Hindu in the spirit of repentance. It can never be a question of barter for me. And I am glad you take nearly the same position that I do."

# The All India Kisan Movement

## The History of the All India Kisan Sabha\*

Although the Indian Peasantry had really come to need an All India Kisan Sabha as long ago as 1930, i.e., when the Mont-Ford reforms were being introduced with their extension of franchise mostly to our peasants, no class conscious attempt was made to create it until 1935. Prof. Ranga created the necessary atmosphere favourable to the idea of creating the All India Kisan Sabha, first by forming the Peasants' Group of M. L. A.'s in 1935 August-September and then by issuing a number of appeals in September, popularising the idea of an All India Kisan Organisation and calling for co-operation for establishing it. In the meanwhile Prof. Ranga visited the Punjab and Central Provinces, interested the local comrades in the Kisan Movement and formed provisional Kisan Organisation Committees. Thus the idea of the All India Kisan Committee gained much support.

## The All India Peasants' Workers' Conference

This Conference was held at Madras on the 19th of October 1935 under the auspices of the South Indian Federation of Peasants and Workers, Professor N. G. Ranga presiding. Most of the Provinces were represented. Addressing the workers, Professor Ranga said that the time had come when an All India Peasants' Organisation should be developed to give a fitting reply to government and to utilise completely the proffered opportunity to "influence and indeed determine the views and actions of Congressmen. It is this extraordinarily potent new time-spirit, surcharged as it is with cataclysmic Russian achievements especially in regard to the Peasantry and its problems, that we have to try and utilise for the advancement of our Peasantry.....Apart from the considerations of justice and fairplay, we can ill-afford to allow in our own interests, the continuation of the present unsatisfactory relations between our Peasants and Workers.....We have to carry on incessant and ceaseless propaganda amongst our Peasantry and in our countryside to make them realise their class-consciousness and shoulder their historic responsibility. It is however our bounden duty to do what all we can to strengthen our peasants and equip them in every possible way so that they can eliminate this class-war which to-day eats into their very vitals.....It is up to us to see that the industries of our country are ruralised and socialised as soon as possible and that any further industrial development is allowed only on collective or cooperative lines so that any profits direct or indirect arising from such ventures will be shared in by all the masses.....But to convert our Peasants to the advantage of such a system (Collectivisation of Agriculture) will not be an easy task as is shown by Russia's experience and it is our task to carry on ceaseless propaganda to win their agreement on this point."

The All India Peasants' Organisation Committee was appointed to make arrangements for the holding of an All India Peasants' Conference, if possible at Lucknow in April 1936.

## Between Madras and Meerut

A day or two before the Madras Conference had met some Bihar Kisan Leaders issued a Press Statement expressing their doubts whether the time had come for the development of an All India Kisan Organisation. But the All India Kisan Organisation Committee went on with its organisation work. The whole of Tamilnad and Orissa were brought within the orbit of the All India Kisan Movement. Prof. Ranga interviewed a large number of comrades interested in Kisan Work and got an Economic Enquiry Committee appointed. But to obtain the co-operation of and allay the apprehensions of Congress Socialist leaders such as Jayaprakash Narain and Mohanlal Gantam, the original Committee had to agree to convene a Peasants' Organisation Representative Conference at Meerut on the 15th. January 1936 at the time of the

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\*The following account of the All India Kisan Movement and its provincial organisations has been supplied to us very kindly by Prof. N. G. Ranga, M. L. A., President of the All India Kisan Sabha.

third Congress Socialist Conference. At that conference after a considerable amount of discussion the following decisions were arrived at, thanks to the willingness of the Madras Committee to merge itself in the new committee.

#### The Meerut Meeting

A conference of representatives of Kisan organisations of different provinces in the country was held at Meerut on Jan. 18th, 1936. Mr. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya presided. The following resolutions were passed:

#### RESOLUTIONS

(1) This Conference recognises the urgent need for organising the All India Kisan Congress and appoints organising Committees to organise the All India Peasants' Conference at Lucknow, (ii) co-ordinate, organise, guide and help the various Provincial Peasants' Organisations in the meanwhile and (iii) help, guide and strengthen the Peasants' struggles in the country so as to bring into existence at the earliest possible moment the All India Kisan Congress.

(2) The object of the Peasants' Movements is to secure complete freedom from economic exploitation and the achievement of full economic and political power for the peasants and workers and all other exploited classes.

(3) The main task of the Kisan Sangh shall be the organisation of Peasants to fight for their immediate political and economic demands in order to prepare them for their emancipation from every form of political exploitation.

(4) The Kisan Sangh stands for the achievement of ultimate economic and political power for the producing masses through its active participation in the national struggle for the winning of complete Independence.

#### The First All India Kisan Congress at Lucknow

Thus in pursuance of the resolutions of the Madras and Meerut Kisan Conferences the first All India Kisan Congress was held under the Presidency of Swami Sahajananda Saraswathi, the Bihar Kisan Leader. Comrades Indulal Yagnik, Barrister Mann, Datt Mazumdar and others also came to co-operate with others. This session prepared the All India Kisan Manifesto and formulated the minimum demands of Peasants. The Bombay Session of the All India Kisan Committee had amplified this charter.

#### The All India Kisan Bulletin

The Lucknow Kisan Congress decided upon publishing the All India Kisan bulletin and appointed Indulal Yagnik as its Editor. Ever since this bulletin has served the Kisan movement and helped to centralise the news of its development in different provinces.

#### Second All India Kisan Congress

The following are important excerpts from the presidential address delivered by Prof. Ranga at the second session of the Kisan Congress held at Fairpur on the 26th December 1936:—

"To-day our Kisan Congress is, in view of the politically-minded, second in its importance to the Indian National Congress. Every minute, however employed, of our life is being poisoned by the tightening grips of the huge python of our subjection to this Empire. What is it the New Act holds in store for us? More slavery, more chains, and more poison. We must rise in all our stature and furiously repudiate this act, remove the power of the Parliament which made it and set about the task of destroying the whole super-structure of slavery.

"We shall be failing in our duty to ourselves if we do not openly, unequivocally repudiate the assumption underlying the present Congress Parliamentary policy that our immediate fight is only political and it shall not be complicated by any economic issues.

"If by accepting the ministry our Parliamentarians can and will make a determined attack through legislative administration and even social and religious means upon the many and varied privileges of our vested interests, the acceptance of ministry need not be such terrible bugbear as it is to-day. But we know that the Congress Parliamentarians are not prepared to bend all their energies and resources to strike hard against the candidates of Indian interests of exploitation. Hence our anxiety to join hands with the Congress anti-ministerialists. If to-day any particular class

is highly super-abundantly conscious of its own aims, needs and means, it is the capitalist and landed classes in our country. So it is foolish on the part of any Kisan or Indian worth the name to cherish the hope that his anti-imperialist fight will be strengthened either openly or secretly by the upper classes. It is wrong to think that they are likely to be ranged against us either openly or secretly and are fast forming themselves with the active guidance and tuition from the British into a solid phalanx against not only our forces but also the nationalist forces. So we are left only with the masses to win the much coveted Swaraj. All of us can best serve our common cause and best achieve our common end by trying through our functional organisations to improve the immediate lot of our rank and file, not by reformist methods but by revolutionary means and by militarising and radicalising the outlook of our people.

"It is to centralise and guide our independent but mutually dependent propagandistic organisational and ideological campaigns so as to make them most effective and least wasteful, we need the Indian National Congress. It is our common Forum, and through it we shall inspire one another. It has to be our anti-imperialist Watch Dog as against all anti-nationalised forces in the country and our sentinel to draw inspiration and strength from the international struggle of the toiling millions of the World. Therefore "it is the duty of every section of the masses to struggle hard to revolutionise its attitude towards the masses as a whole and every one of our sections in particular."

"At every stage our zamindars and capitalists are obstructing our struggle for Swaraj. It is therefore as much our duty to continually fight and undermine the stamina of our Indian vested interests as it is our necessity to remove all vestiges of the foreign domination.".....Throughout this vast land fresh chains of slavery and subjection are being forged to be donned on us. To fight them constantly and to ward off all the unprovoked attacks of the vested interests, we must be able to depend upon our organised rank and file and well trained, tutored and trusted servants and well martialled organisations.

"The Congress election manifesto falls far short of our charter of minimum demands which really is our absolute minimum charter. So it is the duty of every Kisan to see that the Kisans' votes are voluntarily canvassed and cast through the influence of the Kisan Movement only to those Congress candidates, who readily pledge themselves to sponsor support and strengthen our minimum demands in so far as it lies in their power as the Congress members of a legislature. This will only compel and strengthen the Peasant-minded Congress Legislators to try their best to radicalise every Congress decision at every stage of their parliamentary career and thus strengthen our Kisan cause. Nothing good or great can be expected even from our prospective national Congress legislators through their legislative work until and unless we either strengthen them or force their hands.

"Our Kisans and workers have to forge their own sanctions to force the acceptance of their demands upon the vested interests, functioning in and outside the legislature. Our sacrifices alone can be our sanctions and our readiness and capacity to suffer and strengthen them. The best and most effective manner in which we can force the legislatures and ministries to speedily give satisfaction to our demands is to fix for ourselves a time table according to which we can prepare ourselves for our fight for their achievements."....."If within the time given, the legislators do not undertake the legislation proposed by us then "we must try to be as good as our word and try to inaugurate our fight to demonstrate the strength of our sanctions. But the rank and file of the Kisans are expected to make the minimum sacrifice whereas our comrades are demanded to put in their maximum sacrifice and suffering."....."There is one great difficulty for us to overcome. While our peasants and comrades need a respite, our enemies need it not, while we have to pause and take breath in between any two fights, our opponents are at it all the time. But our movement has the great advantage over our enemies of being able to generate and engender the class consciousness—invincible and overbearing—of the masses, which can and will triumph over the armed battalions of our enemies.

We are badly in need of a real creative and lively literature for our villages and only our intellectuals can supply it to us. I can assure our intellectuals that by serving us they will be placing themselves in the illustrious company of the Mahatma, Unnava of the Andhra, Tolstoy, Gorki of Russia, and Ibsen of Norway. Our Kisan comrades are again given a comradely lead by the grand old man of Kisan India by his latest move to live in a village, to think and talk in terms of our village life and

needs and to suffer from and save the villages from the growing diseases that infect so many of our villages.

"I wish to say that as a full-blooded son of a peasant with many generations of peasant blood, culture, fighting spirit and love of the Sacred Mother Earth in me, I am filled with inexpressible happiness to be one of you in this inspiring Congress of Kisans."

#### The All India Kisan Publications

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru performed in September 1936 the inaugural ceremony of the All India Kisan Publications. Their first publication the 'Modern Indian Peasant' was published in November 1936.

#### Development of the Kisan Organisations

By now Provincial Kisan Committees have come into existence and begun to work in the following provinces : Andhra, Tamilnad, Maharashtra, Malabar, Karnatak, Central Provinces Hindi, Guzarat, Punjab, Delhi, U. P., Bihar, Bengal, Utkal, Assam.

*Secretariat* : The Secretariat of the All India Kisan Committee.

*President* : Prof. N. G. Ranga

*General Secretary* : Swami Sahajananda Saraswathi

*Joint Secretaries* : Indulal Yagnik. B. P. L. Bodi. Bankim Mukherjee.

#### Congress and Peasants in 1935

Babu Rajendra Prasad, as president of the Congress said on the 17th of October in answer to the South Indian Federation of Peasants' demands, "as Gandhiji said at the Round Table Conference, the Congress is par excellence and in a sense a peasants' organisation...whether they agree in all the details or not I am not sure and I wish you to accept that from me, that it is the duty of Congressmen to do what they can to secure justice and fair treatment for you. But more than that, you are in a position to influence and indeed determine the views and actions of Congressmen and as days go on your power will go on increasing."

#### Congress and Peasants in 1936 : Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

The South Indian Federation of Peasants has met Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the 7th October 1936 when he admitted that the "land problem was the biggest problem facing India. Peasants have to organise themselves into their independent class conscious organisations and that they have to do all they can to obtain not only proper recognition from the Congress but also a fitting place for peasants within the Congress through functional representation.

#### Lucknow National Congress

At Lucknow Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru supported the plea of the Peasants and the Congress Socialists for functional representation in the Congress. To settle this question a sub-committee was appointed. Prof. Ranga and Swami Sahajananda Saraswathi submitted various other proposals to this committee agreeing with the general principle of establishing a functional alliance between the Indian National Congress and the Trade Union Congress and the All India Kisan Sabha. The Indian National Congress has also appointed an agrarian sub-committee to prepare in co-operation with the Provincial Congress Committees a satisfactory agrarian programme of the Congress to be incorporated in the Congress charter of fundamental rights.

#### Congress Election Manifesto

At the Bombay A. I. C. C. meeting held in September 1936, the Congress election manifesto was prepared but no detailed proposals for assisting and protecting Peasants were brought forward. When the need for such proposals was insisted upon Babu Rajendra Prasad said that as soon as the Provincial Congress Committees' enquiries were conducted, detailed proposals would be made.

#### Fairplay Congress : FUNCTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Even Pandit Jawaharlal has cooled down in his enthusiasm for establishing functional representation for Kisans and workers in the Congress, mostly because of the opposition of the rights in the Congress and the indifference to it expressed so unexpectedly by the recently released Mr. M. N. Roy.

### Faizpur Agrarian Programme

In pursuance of the Lucknow Congress resolution the Provincial Congress Committees of Bihar, U. P., Maharashtra, and C. P. only had attempted to conduct some enquiries into the economic conditions of Peasants. Because of this the A. I. C. C. pleaded its inability to produce any agrarian programme. But Prof. Ranga and Swami Sahajananda had to put up a very stiff fight with the President and the Working Committee behind him and insist upon the Working Committee coming forward with at least a provisional programme. In the end the now famous Faizpur agrarian programme was adopted by the Faizpur Indian National Congress on behalf of the Kisans. Prof. Ranga said that it did not go far enough and the peasants, though accepting it as a provisional measure, would continue to strive for the development by the Congress of a more satisfactory agrarian Programme.

### The National Convention and Peasants in 1937

The National Convention which was convened by the Indian National Congress on the 19th and 20th of March 1937 had demanded that the Congress members of the legislatures should press for the carrying out of the Congress programme as enunciated in the election manifesto and the Congress agrarian resolution. "In particular they should work for (1) a substantial reduction in rent and revenue (2) assessment of incomes, on a progressive scale, on agricultural incomes subject to a prescribed minimum (3) fixity of tenure (4) relief from the burden of rural debt and arrears of rent and revenue, (5) Restoration of lands and property confiscated or sold by government during Civil Disobedience Movements (6) Living wages (7) Unemployment relief." On an appeal made by Prof. Ranga Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru agreed that there should be an interim moratorium for agrarian debts, living wages established for agrarian labour also and unemployment relief for all the unemployed educated or uneducated.

### Peasants and 1937 Election

Peasants have demonstrated all over India their national and class-consciousness in the provincial Assembly elections held in February 1937. "The marvellous success at the Polls of the Congress" in U. P., Bihar and C. P. "was due to the Kisan movement and the Kisan versus the zamindars or the poor versus the rich issue crystallised during these elections." "In the Andhra, everywhere it is our Peasants' movement which is bound to be of invaluable help to the Congress. Our Peasants' Songs were reprinted for electioneering purposes and 55000 copies of it are being circulated throughout the Andhra. If to-day any propaganda is being carried on in the south it is entirely on the lines of our peasants' songs". In Bengal even the Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha candidates were obliged to talk of their readiness to work for the welfare of the peasants and to amend the Tenancy Act and tackle the problem of agricultural indebtedness mostly because of the whirlwind and intensive propaganda carried on by the Kisan-proja party on the lines of its very radical economic programme and also because of the agrarian programme of the Congress. The success of one avowed socialist in the Punjab and a champion of the khotes in Maharashtra and the triumph of the Congress Party of Utkal, pledged as it was to the abolition of permanent settlement, are significant portents of the upsurge of peasants' revolutionary spirit. In short, Dr. Gilbert Slater, D. Sc. (London) was right in congratulating the All India Kisan Sabha upon the splendid response that our kisans have given to the Congress and helped to achieve its majorities in six provinces.

### The Kisan Proja Party's Programme

It is highly significant of the irresistible and growing class consciousness of Indian Peasants that the Bengali Muhammadans should have succeeded in returning to the Legislative Assembly so large a number of candidates of the Kisan Proja Party in spite of the powerful opposition of the Muslim League with all its money, press and official support and of its own want of finances and press. Mr. Fazlul Haq, its leader, has become the chief Minister of the Bengal Government to try to implement its programme but many of its influential followers had already begun to protest against his failure and that of his ministry to achieve any of the following demands formulated only by the moderates in the Kisan Proja Party.

### The Economic Programme

1. In view of the fact that the land revenue system known as the permanent settlement and the landlaws of Bengal have arrested the economic growth and development of the Province and adversely affected the national outlook of the people, a committee of enquiry must be immediately appointed to devise ways and means to get them replaced by a more equitable system and law suitable to the needs and requirements of the people.

2. Amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act on the following lines :

(a) to reduce rent by fixing a maximum for each class of land. (i) amendment of the provisions relating to the enhancement of rent in the interests of the tillers of the soil.

(b) to recognise mutation of names and division of holdings without fees.

(c) to annul the landlords' right of pre-emption.

(d) to abolish nazar salami.

(e) to provide criminal remedies for all illegal exactions, e.g., abwab etc.

(f) to take such other measures as may be necessary for the relief of the Peasants.

3. Amendment of the public demands recovery act, specially to mitigate the rigours of the certificate procedure.

4. To devise ways and means of freeing the cultivators from the crushing burden of indebtedness.

5. Amendment of the Co-operative Societies Act as to make it really conducive to the economic advancement of the Indian People.

6. Immediate introduction of compulsory Primary Education without taxation of those who are unable to bear the burden.

7. Reduction in the cost of administration.

8. To control the prices of Jute through

(a) limitation of production,

(b) marketing boards,

(c) other suitable methods.

9. Resuscitation of dead and drying rivers and khals through local manual labour.

10. To undertake measures of Public Health and Rural Sanitation.

11. Repeal of Tobacco tax and direct taxes on the necessities of life.

12. Repeal of oppressive laws and release of political prisoners and detainees consistent with our public safety.

### The Andhra Peasants' Pledge

The last Provincial Assembly elections have brought to the fore the growing contradictions latent in the relations between the Indian National Congress and the Kisan Movement. True to their national duty and their own decision to develop and support a united front against the imperialist power dominating over India's destiny, the kisans had decided at Faizpur in their second All India Congress to generally support the Congress in the election and to extend their special organisational support to those Congress candidates who had pledged themselves to implement the kisans' demands through their activities within and without the congress parliamentary parties. The Andhra Peasants have taken the lead in this matter since they had very early developed their class consciousness and decided in the annual conference at Nidubrolu on the 2nd. of June 1936, to carry on negotiations with Congress to get candidates suggested by peasants' Associations selected by Congress as its candidates. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, president of the Indian Congress said : "I would like very much to have ryots' representations chosen as Congress candidates, and I would like further to see the Congress adopt a radical agrarian programme. It may even be possible to have freedom of voting on specific issues later on". He had however stated : "I am not directly connected with the selection of candidates". Then the Congress Parliamentary Committee was approached with the same request but their reply was even less satisfactory. In spite of all this, the Faizpur Kisan Congress decided to exhort peasants to extend their general support to the Congress candidates. Knowing as they did how slow were many of the Provincial Congress Committees to develop their agrarian programme and how difficult it became for their champions on the All India Congress Committee to persuade the Congress Working Committee, to bring forward their resolution of agrarian programme, the kisans in their Faizpur Congress decided upon insisting on a special pledge from those Congress candidates as were anxious to derive their special organisational support of the Kisan Movement.

The Andhra Provincial Ryots' Association issued its Peasants' Pledge in January 1937 to be signed by those Congress candidates who wanted to seek its assistance through its pledge form. This Association had only sought to ask the Congress candidates to do all in their power through their activities in and outside the legislatures to radicalise the attitude of the Congress and its parliamentary party towards the Kisan demands and needs.

No sooner had it issued its peasants' pledge than a large number of Congress candidates had hastened to sign it, so anxious were they to take advantage of the support of the Kisan movement. But the local Congress leaders who were not in sympathy with the independent growth of the Peasants' Movement bided their time, until after the scrutiny day was over and then prejudiced Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel, the President, of the All India Congress Parliamentary Committee against the Andhra Peasants' Pledge. So without giving any previous notice to the Andhra Ryots' Association and even attempting to ascertain facts, and taking advantage of their hold upon Prof. Ranga who was a Congress M. L. A. of the Central Assembly and a member of the A. I. C. C., Sirdar Patel took the most uncomradely and unjustifiable action of taking the Press and public into his confidence in order to publish his uncompromising opposition to the peasants' pledge and to call for disciplinary action against Professor Ranga, the president of the Andhra Ryots' Association and also against those Congress candidates who might decline to withdraw from the peasants' pledge.

This ukase of Sirdar Patel naturally had upset the comrades all over India and frightened the Congress candidates and Kisan comrades as to the fate of the Congress in the elections if only the Andhra Peasants' Association had refused to withdraw their pledge. Professor Ranga had however subdued his own natural resentment at this most undemocratic and uncomradely attitude of the Congress authorities and withdrew the pledge and released the Congress candidates from it in order not to divert the attention of the peasants from their duty to present a united front to British Imperialism and to save the Congress candidates from the unenviable plight of having to withdraw from their own pledged pledge given to peasants. But protests began to pour in against its withdrawal from Kisan comrades of different parts of India. Prof. Ranga who was anxious not to prolong a controversy so unfortunately initiated by Sirdar Patel was obliged to explain the real position and objective of the rightist leaders of the Congress. The Kisan Comrades who were pledged to support the Congress in general had no other choice but to withdraw their pledge and not to weaken the position of the Congress vis-a-vis the reactionary forces. The refusal to withdraw the pledge would have meant an additional source of power to anti-Congress forces and a terrible weakening of the Congress in the elections. Moreover, the timely withdrawal of the pledge had saved the Congress and the Kisan Movement from coming into untimely and suicidal conflict with each other and the weakening of the united front against all the exploiters.

Hence the approval of his action by the Andhra Peasants' Association. But this highhandedness of the Sirdar has created much unpleasantness as between the Congress and Kisan Movement as expressed by Swami Sahajananda Saraswati, Guntur District Ryots' Association and Andhra Ryots' Association. No wonder the 'Congress Socialist' and many Congress socialist parties of various provinces have protested against the behaviour of the Sirdar in no measured terms. Prof. Ranga who has saved the Kisan Movement from a very unpleasant campaign of vilification carried on by Congressmen that would surely have resulted from his refusal to withdraw the pledge and who has placed the interests of the movement before all considerations of his own prestige, made a very strong and well documented protest to the Congress President as soon as the elections were over. He demanded an assurance from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that in future Congress authorities would learn to deal with the Kisan Committees more honourably, becomingly and considerately than in this affair. In answer, Pandit Jawaharlal said that all that controversy had arisen as a result of a gross misunderstanding of the purpose and scope and contents of the Peasants' pledge. He deplored the whole episode and requested the Professor to drop the controversy, as the present and future had much to be attended to than the past, however better might have been its effects. After consulting his colleagues on the A. I. C. C. and the Andhra Ryots' Association, Prof. Ranga has decided to drop this controversy. But the Kisan comrades have learnt one very important lesson from this episode. So far, it was the Kisan movement which has had to yield in the name of the united front, all



the time, to the overbearing and one-sided demands of the Congress. But they are determined that hereafter such a one-sided united front cannot be carried on and the Kisan movement has to demand due consideration for its own demands.

### The Peasants and Labour

The Peasants' movement has begun to concern itself with the uplift of agricultural workers. The leaders of the movement have recognised very early in its development that large numbers of Peasants are in their turn more agricultural workers and therefore to fight for their all round development, they have to strive for the betterment of not only the land owning and cultivating Peasants but also the labourers. Professor Ranga had himself tried though not with much success, to organise in 1929 the agricultural labourers of Qantur District. Another attempt was made in 1933 to organise the field labour in Qantur and East Godavari and in Nellore Dist. in 1934 and 1935. Already the agricultural labourers of the Andhra have become to knock at the doors of Peasants and demand justice for themselves. In Nellore District they have succeeded in 1935 in some villages in obliging peasants to use proper and authorised measures in paying out their wages. Anticipating such and even more expansive conflicts between peasants and agricultural workers, the South Indian Federation of Peasants and workers has formulated a charter of demands for workers which Peasants are willing to concede and are anxious and ready to co-operate with agricultural workers in achieving them.

### Minimum Demand of Workers formulated by the Federation

#### AGRICULTURAL WORKS : DEMANDS

A. 1. Compulsory Labour Exchanges have to be established by Government to equalise and regulate the demands for labour in different agricultural seasons and areas.

2. Decasualisation schemes have to be attached to the Labour Exchange to minimise the unnecessary reserves of labour in transport, shipping, road-making, rice-hauling, groundnut-shelling and other employments.

3. To extend the Factory Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Payment of Wages Act to agricultural workers also, wherever possible and with suitable alterations.

4. To establish Unemployment Insurance, Sickness and Health Insurance.

5. To undertake a national health and housing programme and enable every worker to enjoy minimum housing accommodation.

6. To declare illegal the various methods of lending credit to workers which result in a rate of interest higher than 6 per cent.

7. To extend every convention of the League of Nations with suitable alterations, which has been extended to industrial labour.

8. While opposing the principle of reservation of seats for any class of people, we demand for agricultural workers and peasants at least twice as many seats as are granted to industrial labour.

1. Trade boards have to be statutorily established for every district representing equally the Peasants and workers with an appointed member (a District Judge nominated by Government) as President to fix a minimum wage rate, time and piece-work rates for different kinds of agricultural and allied operations.

2. Similarly wage conditions in such cottage industries as hand-loom weaving, utensil manufacturing, foodi and cigar making, have to be regulated by trade boards.

3. Village officers, Presidents and members of Panchayat boards, and Panchayat courts and Peasants and Workers Union, have to be availed of in order to enforce the decisions of the Trade Boards.

C. 1. All the unoccupied but cultivable lands of Government and similar lands and the home-farms of Zamindars, talukdars, and Zamins over and above 200 acres of wet land or 500 acres of dry lands must be reserved for the Agricultural workers and small peasants and progressive process of distributing these lands among landless workers. Peasants having less than 5 acres of dry land or 2 and a half acres of wet land collectively and through their co-operative agricultural societies without any individual right of alienation, must be started.

2. To thus enable workers and peasants to settle collectively on such lands government has to

(a) undertake anti-malarial campaign and to do every thing to make these lands fit for cultivation.

## THE ALL INDIA KISAN MOVEMENT

- (b) exempt such societies from the payment of any assessment for the first ten years.
  - (c) to extend adequate credit facilities to those collective farming societies.
  - (d) to loan the services of competent agricultural demonstrators to such societies so as to manage their affairs for the first ten years and as long as the members desire.
  - (e) to bear half the cost of housing of agricultural stock needed for the habitation of workers and peasants and their cattle.
- D. 1. Compulsory arbitration boards have to be established to settle the wages and other disputes concerning the conditions of employment, which may arise between peasants and workers.

- 2. The decisions of such Boards ought to be made enforceable in courts.
- 3. Any dispute may be referred to the Arbitration Board by either of the parties to the dispute or even by Government.

4. The arbitration board must be constituted with an equal number of the representatives of workers and peasants in addition to a Chairman selected by Government out of a panel approved of jointly by the Provincial or District Unions, as the case may be, or the workers or peasants or other employers in cottage industries.

The All India Kisan Sabha has appointed an Enquiry Committee with Prof. Ranga, Swami Sahajananda Saraswati, Indulal Yagnik as members to enquire into the grievances, needs and demands of agricultural labour and forced labour. Its questionnaires were published in May 1937 and its report may be ready by April 1938 and presented to the next session of the All India Kisan Mahasabha which is to meet in Bengal in 1938.

### Peasants' Group of M. L. A's.

<b>Office Bearers :</b>	President Vice Presidents	Dr. Khan Sahab. Syed Murtuza Sahib Sydar Mangal Singh
	Secretary	Prof. N. G. Ranga.

This Peasants' Group was sought to be found though in vain in the first session of the Legislative Assembly in 1935 but it came to be organised in the Simla session of 1935 with Mr. Matin Choudhury as President and Prof. Ranga as the Secretary. It has so far functioned for four sessions and has established for itself both in the councils of the Government and M. L. A's quite an effective position.

### Its Work

For the first time through it an effort was sought to be made to create public opinion from the forum of the Legislative Assembly on various peasants' problems. For instance, its policy of protecting the interests of consumers, labourers and joint producers along with the protection of organised industry has come to be accepted though half-heartedly by a majority of the House. The demand made by the Group that the benefits of Budget Surplus ought to be first of all given to the peasants and the poor has come to be tacitly accepted by every one though not admitted in so many words. Hence the rural development grant of an additional Rs. 180 lakhs in 1935-36 budget. Two resolutions in particular regarding the small industries and agricultural indebtedness would not have had a chance of being tabled for discussion or passed by an overwhelming majority as came to be the case but for the peasants' group. In short the group has come to be the Watch Dog of the Peasants' interest in the Assembly and the forum from which public opinion is being created in support of the minimum demands of the peasants.

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### PERSONNEL & PORTENT OF THE GROUP

It is true that many of its members are erstwhile landlords and big men of the country and large vested interests. But it is highly significant that even these people felt bound to resolve that the Zamindari Ryots need much protection from the Zamindars, that the land revenue system must be revolutionised, that the tax-burdens are to be shifted from over the shoulders of the poor on to those of the rich and the landed and super tax ought not to be remitted but the income-tax on landed income ought to be levied. This group has served this excellent purpose of marking how far the least socialist minded M. L. A's of the nationalist persuasion can be persuaded to come forward to espouse the minimum demands of the peasants.

**S. I. Federation of Peasants & Agricultural Labour**

Office Bearers : President : K. Nagaswara Rao. Vice-President : S. Kamaraswamiraja. General Secretary : Prof N. G. Ranga, Joint Secretaries : G. Rameswami-reddiar, Sankaran Namboodripad.

**HISTORY**

This Federation was first organised in 1935 on the 26th of April. It has so far published ten bulletins on various Peasants' problems. It has prepared and published the Peasants' Charter of Minimum Demands.

**WORK**

It has organised the Peasant Marches in November and December of 1935 all over the Madras Presidency including all the four linguistic Provinces. Its success in this made the Madras Government make an important reference to the Peasants' marches in its administration reports. To it are affiliated the Andhra Ryots' Association, Zamindari Ryots' Association, the District Ryots' Associations of Trichinopoly, Madurai, Ramanad, Sivaganga, Coimbatore, Chingleput, Salem, North Arcot, Tinnevely, South Arcot and Tanjore Districts.

**INAMS LEGISLATION**

It has protested with very great effect against the attempt of the Select Committee of the Legislature to raise the compensation to be paid by the ryots to landlords from one year's rental to that of two years. Consequently the Council made it only one Year's rental.

**FEDERATION AND PEASANTS' ASSOCIATION**

The relationship of the Federation with that of the various taluk district and Provincial Associations is that of comradely cooperation. It can and seeks to cooperate with them, encourage them in their work, try to obtain adequate publicity for their activities, agitation and funds. Hence the establishment of an independent office, the Kisan Press, the starting of the All India Kisan Publication Committee and the founding of the Vahini Paper. We have just now published the 'Modern Indian Peasant' at the very low price of one rupee. Attempts are being made to start an English monthly to espouse the cause of the peasants and agricultural labourers.

**ALL INDIA KISAN CONGRESS**

Our Federation can rightly claim to have taken the lead in laying the foundations for the establishment of the All India Kisan Congress. We have organised in October 1935, the All India Peasants' Workers' Conference under the Presidency of Prof. N. G. Ranga and helped to form the first All India Kisan Organisation Committee. Muzra Mohanlal (Gautam, Jaiprakash Narain, Anandeshwar Sinha of the Congress Socialist Party had fortunately cooperated at Meerut with Professor Ranga, on the 15th Jan. 1936 to reorganise that organisation Committee and eventually to hold the first All India Kisan Congress at Lucknow under the Presidency of Swami Sahajananda Saraswati.

**Andhra Provincial Ryots' Association**

Office Bearers : President G. Brahmara. Vice-President : Mrs. Bharatidevi Ranga. General Secretaries : K. Satyanarayanamurthy, K. Narayana Rao and Ch. Vasudeva Rao. Treasurer : A. Thimma Reddy.

**HISTORY**

This association was founded by Mr M. B. Needa and Prof Ranga in 1928 at Guntur, when the first Andhra Provincial Ryots' Conference was held under the Presidentship of Mr B. V. Katnam, M.L.A. It was led by the people of all political parties till 1934 when the Justices, in whose control the organisation has remained in 1931-33, had found it impossible to stem the upsurge of radical elements among the Peasantry. Since 1934 it has come to play a very prominent role in the organised life of the Andhra Peasantry with Prof Ranga and his devoted band of Peasant workers at its head. It was registered on the 11th June 1936 under the Act XXI of 1930 and its Official Headquarters are at Nidubrolu, the seat of the Peasants' Institute and Prof. Ranga's Peasants' Library and Peasants' Publication Committee.

## THE ALL INDIA KISAN MOVEMENT

### PEASANTS' MARCHES AND ALL INDIA KISAN DAY

It was under the auspices of this Association the 1935 Peasants' March on the 22nd Nov. and 7th Dec. and the All India Kisan day on the 1st Sept. 1931 were celebrated all over the Andhra. In as many as 28 places were peasants' marches organised in which many thousands had taken part. On the 1st All India Kisan day, according to the information received by our Association, Peasants' Conferences were held in a hundred villages of Guntur District and 300 villages of other Andhra Districts. So far the Andhra Peasants' celebrations hold the first place in India.

### MAY DAY

In addition to getting celebrated all the National Days prescribed by the Indian National Congress, our Association has followed the leadership of the Peasants' Protection Committee and observed the May Day of 1935, 36, and 37 in many villages of the Andhra,—, thus demonstrating its capacity to declare its class consciousness and fraternity with the world's peasants and workers.

### FAMINE RELIEF

This Association has co-operated with the Peasants' Protection Committee in organising in 1935, the Rôyalaseema Famine Relief Committee which rendered invaluable assistance to five famine ridden districts. They have carried on raging and successful agitation for obtaining timely Governmental assistance. In 1935-36 they have taken the lead in organising famine relief work and public agitation in Ganjam district and rendered great help to the suffering. As a result of their activities remission of land revenue was secured; salt concessions extended; famine relief works opened, taccavi loans distributed and cattle supplied with cheap fodder.

### RESETTLEMENTS

The special settlement officers for Guntur and Kurnool have recommended an enhancement by 18 and three-fourth percent of the land revenue assessment of Guntur and Kurnool districts Ryots' associations backed by the Provincial Association and carried on an effective agitation against the imposition of this unjust enhancement and the government in the end had to bow before our agitation and suspend the imposition of the enhancement until after the inauguration of the reforms.

### REVENUE REMISSIONS

The Peasants' Protection Committee's work all over the province demanding adequate land revenue remissions was taken over in 1935 by this organisation and through innumerable village, taluk, and district Ryots' Conferences, intensified by the Peasants' Marches, we have succeeded in obliging the Madras Government in granting some remissions, though not much of land revenue (at 1 as. in the rupee for dry lands and 1 and half as. per wet lands for 1935-36 also.) It is in anticipation of our 1936 marches and to rob the wind behind our sails (for our marches were coming off on the 26th November) the government has declared on the 20th. October its readiness to grant some remission of land revenue. The interim Ministry has now (April 1937) offered to grant 25 per cent remission, stop all settlement enhancements and suspend all resettlement operations, thus proving the practicability of our peasants' demand.

### GUDAYARI KISAN RESETTLEMENT RATES

It was the Peasants' Protection Committee with the able assistance of the resettlement committee of which Messrs. D. N. Raju, M. B. Neelc were the president and secretary respectively which obliged the Madras Government in 1931 to imprison 9 of our Peasant leaders and to apply the No-Tax Ordinance to the Andhra. If from 1933 till to-day, the Madras Government has failed to collect the full 18 and three-fourth enhancement which was imposed upon those three districts, in the teeth of a great public opposition, it is all because of the fast growing organized strength of our peasants. Hence this years complete remission of 18 and three-fourth per cent in the land revenue payable by those ryots.

### INAMS LEGISLATION

It was in September 1933 that the Andhra Zamindari Ryots Conference demanded the conferring of Occupancy Rights upon all the Inamdar Ryots. The Bhabli Ministry wanted to pose as the champion of our Peasants and so sponsored a bill to

confer this right upon these much exploited peasants, but unfortunately the majority of Brahmin lawyers and publicists and politicians rose in rebellion against this bill; even the so-called Congress Press became either hostile or silent and most of our Congress leaders have become strangely mute. But our Associations have not only supported the Bill but also demanded a wholesome lowering of the rents at least to the level of Government rates.

#### DEBTS SETTLEMENT ACT

We have taken up the work of the P. P. C. in regard to its demand for protection for the indebted peasants and have organised, thanks to the excellent lead of our deceased comrade, S. K. V. Chalapathi, a special Provincial Rural Indebtedness Relief Conference and organised a special and systematic campaign against the failure of Government to relieve the agrarian distress due to indebtedness. The result is the most unsatisfying debt settlement act and the revision of the Boards' Standing order for taccavi loans. The interim Ministry proposes in May '37 to raise a crore loan and help peasants to liquidate their debts to be settled by the debts settlement committees. We are not at all satisfied with these palliatives.

#### PEASANTS' INSTITUTE

We have tried our best to co-operate with the P. P. C. in running and assisting the Peasants' Institute at Nidubrolu which has trained and sent out its third batch of students most of whom are doing excellent work in the districts. The peasants' Institute has commenced its fourth Session on the May day of 1937.

#### PT. JAWAHARLAL'S TRIBUTE

Pandit Jawaharlal has visited the Andhra Province in October and November 1936 and has paid glowing tributes to the good work being done by our all pervading Peasants' associations and also to the "class consciousness and socialist mindedness of the Peasants' Movement started by Prof. N. G. Ranga." We are rightly proud of our Movement. We ought not to close the brief account of our work without adding a few lines about the really meritorious work carried on by our two sister organisations the P. P. C. and the Andhra Zamindari Ryots' Association.

#### Peasants' Protection Committee

This P. P. C. was first started in June 1931 by Professor Ranga when he envisaged the impossibility of getting any radical course de l' action adopted by the then all party leadership of the Andhra Ryots' Association. As anticipated by him that Association passed in that October completely into the hands of the Justices who are the worst moderates in this Province. From that time till 1935 when the A. P. R. A. came to be captured by the Socialist-minded workers, it was the P. P. C. that kept up the militant attitude and tactics of our Peasants' Movement, maintained the morale of our peasantry, even when many Congress workers were demoralised by the overbearing ordinances, devised and developed the Peasants' Marches, published the Peasants' Songs, started the Peasants' Institute, Peasants' Reference Library, Peasants' Publication Company, and mapped out the vast Andhra country with a fine network of taluk and district organisations to all of which our association has to-day become the heir.

#### The Andhra Zamin Ryots' Association :

	<i>President :</i> G. Ranga Nayakulu
<b>OFFICE-BEARERS :</b>	<i>Secretaries :</i> K. M. Sarma
	N. V. R. Naidu
	K. Subba Rao

#### HISTORY

This Association was founded in 1929 by Messrs R. M. Sarma, B. V. P. Raju, C. I. E., M. B. Needu, N. G. Ranga with Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju as its president. It then sought to get the Estates Land Act of 1908 suitably amended to help the Zamindari ryots. Its leaders were then highly moderate and lawyer-minded. Mr. Biswanath Das Mahasaya, M. L. C. who started this agitation on behalf of these ryots in 1921 was then its main source of inspiration. But at its second annual conference held at Venkatagiri in 1931 under the presidency of Prof. N. G. Ranga it has undergone a regular metamorphosis. It has declared as its objective the final abolition of the zamindari system through legislative action. It formulated its immediate demands. It insisted upon its right to assemble in spite of the section 144 applied to it by

local Government. Since then the Andhra Zamindari Ryots' Movement and its leaders Prof. Ranga and M. V. R. Naidu have become the bete noir to the zamindars and local government. At the third provincial conference held in 1933, the charter of minimum demands initiated by Mr. R. M. Sarma, who was making an excellent effort to go with the radicals, was adopted. After the peasants met Mahatma Gandhi at Venkatagiri in December 1933 and heard his heartening advice, they agreed with their leader that the abolition of the zamindari system should be achieved not only by legislative but also by other means.

#### ECONOMIC ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

It is interesting to note that while the Indian National Congress has begun to make some enquiries into the conditions of peasants only after the 1936 Lucknow Congress, the Nellore peasants have appointed their committee in 1933 and the Andhra Peasants, their E. E. Committee in 1933 and the result was the authoritative and irrefutable and epoch-making report on the "Economic Conditions of zamindari Ryots" published in 1933 by the A. P. Committee.

#### AMENDMENTS TO ESTATE LAND ACT

When Prof. Ranga was trying to co-operate with some of the leaders of the moderate minded peasants, an attempt was made to introduce into the Madras Legislative Council, an amendment bill embodying the peasants' minimum demands and drafted by Mr. V. Ramdas Pantulu. But the Rajah of Bobbili prevented even its introduction. The official bill has attempted, thanks to the able and sincere fight of the late Dewan Bahadur B. Munuswami Naidu (ex-ohief Minister), a friend of the ryots, to improve the existing unenviable plight of the Zamin Ryots and remove a few of the glaring injustices.

#### GOVERNMENT AND ZAMIN RYOTS

As between the Peasants and Zamindars, Government steps in from time to time to help and bolster up the Zamindars. With Governmental help our Zamindars try to get our conferences banned as in Venkatagiri, to disturb our meetings as in Bobbili, to destroy our Associations as in Mungala and to harass our workers as in Pithapur. Government has so far failed to so amend the Estates Land Act as to place our Zamin Ryots at least on the same footing as Ryotwari Ryots.

#### SURVEY AND SETTLEMENT IN BOBBILI

We are glad to say that the real seeds for our Peasants' Movement were laid in 1921 by the 22 courageous, though illiterate ryots of Bobbili who then went to jail to demand that their lands should be surveyed and settled in a humane and scientific manner. By now their lands have come to be surveyed, displaying thereby that the Rajah of Bobbili has been collecting the inhuman rent of Rs. 35 per acre for more than 100 acres of land that did not exist. They are now fighting hard to get their rent reduced. But how can they succeed against the Zamindar who is the Chief Minister whose officials are so bad as to try to disperse Pandit Nehru's meeting with the aid of mad elephants?

#### RE-SETTLEMENT IN PARLAKIMEDI

The Ryots of Parlakimedi have had to put up a very costly and stiff fight to prevent the 300 per cent enhancement of their Rs. 7 per acre rate as demanded by the Rajah. After a two years' fight they have received the small mercy from the Revenue Board that there should be only 86 per cent enhancement. Our Ryots have preferred an appeal at this unfair decision.

#### CIVIL LIBERTIES IN THE ZAMINDARIES

One of the most important services rendered by the Zamindari Ryot Movement and its leaders is to fight relentlessly against the tyrannical Zamindari Bundobust to prevent peasants from organizing their meetings, conferences and associations. In spite of the many attempts to beat, insult and ill-treat him in many other ways, known only to zamindars and possible only in Zamindari, Prof. Ranga has been trying since 1931 to open up every zamindari village and bring it into a line with the rest of Nationalist India, make it possible for it to lead a political and self-conscious life. Of course the police have been at the beck and call of the zamindars, but who prevent the masses from asserting themselves once they make up their mind to free themselves from all their shackles?

**THE WORLDLY PROPERTY OF OUR MOVEMENT**

To-day the Andhra Ryots' and Zamin Ryots' Movement have in their possession four printing presses; the Peasants' Press at Chicacole, Ryots' Press at Rajahmundry, Zamin Ryots' Press of Nellore and Kisan Press of Madras. We are served by three weeklies and one tri-weekly, the Prajavani, the Ryot Patrika, the Zamin Hoyt and the Vahini.

**GOVERNMENT REPRESSION**

In addition to those who were imprisoned in 1931 during the resettlement agitation, the Madras Government has recently prosecuted Mr. P. Sundarajah, one of our workers. It has demanded a security of Rs. 1000 from our Kisan Press and an equal amount from Vahini, our Tri-weekly from Madras.

**SECOND (PEASANT) PRACHARAK SCHOOL**

Mr. R. M. Sarma organised this school at Kovvur in 1935 to train up young peasants to carry on the Zamin Ryots' Movement. It may be interesting to note that a C. I. D. shorthand Sub-Inspector in addition to the local police carefully watches the activities of this school and the Peasants Institute at Nidubrolu. One of the graduates of the Peasants' Institute, Mr. N. Murty has also opened another institute at Terlam, another storm centre in Bobbili Zamindari and Messrs. Vallabhras, K. G. Reddi another at Madanapalli.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Membership of our organisation is discouragingly low. The Ryots' Association has so far reached only 22500 members and the Zamin Ryots' Association has only 22000 members. But these two Provincial Associations and the ad hoc Peasants' Protection Committee has established between themselves an extraordinary hold upon the Peasants of our countryside.

**POLITICS]**

At the special Provincial Peasants' Conference held on the 8th. November our Ryots have decided to generally support the Congress candidates but to exercise all their resources only in favour of those Congress candidates who are prepared to stand by the Peasants' Minimum Demands and to oppose those who being themselves Zamindars in favour of Zamindari System or unprepared to stand by the Peasants.

# **The All India Kisan Manifesto**

**As adopted by the All-India Kisan Committee on 21st Aug. 1936**

**Kisans' Charters of Rights**

The object and main task of the Kisan movement are stated in the following resolution passed at the first All-India Kisan Congress held at Lucknow on the 11th April 1936 :—

"The object of the Kisan movement is to secure complete freedom from economic exploitation and the achievement of full economic and political power for the peasants and workers and all other exploited classes.

"The main task of the Kisan movement shall be the organisation of peasants and fight for their immediate political and economic demands in order to prepare them for their emancipation from every form of exploitation.

"The Kisan movement stands for the achievement of ultimate economic and political power for the producing masses through its active participation in the national struggle for winning complete independence".

The one outstanding fact of Indian economic life is the grinding poverty and utter misery of the vast peasant masses which comprise 80 per cent. of its population. No political or economic programme which has the audacity to ignore their needs and demands can by any stretch of imagination be labelled a national programme. Every organisation claiming to represent the people of India must place the interests of the bankrupt and much exploited ryots, tenants and agricultural labour in the forefront of its programme if it is to vindicate its claim.

Inasmuch as the Indian National Congress is to-day the only effective political body with country-wide organisation claiming to champion the cause of the masses it must necessarily make the solutions of the problems of the peasantry the chief plank of its political and economic policy.

The terrible conditions of the Indian peasants is too well-known to need repetition. The tenants are oppressed by Zamindars, Talukdars and Malguzars, Isamdaras and other landlords. The peasant proprietors have to bear the yoke of a harsh system of land Revenue. The agricultural labour receive, if at all, starvation wages and work and live in conditions bordering on slavery.

But unfortunately while the condition of the peasantry dominates the whole political and economic life of the country, the peasants themselves have been most backward politically and organisationally. The results are twofold; firstly the peasants have been deprived of all the ameliorative legislation, that could have been passed during the last 16 years, even by the present legislatures if the legislators had felt obliged to satisfy the peasants; and secondly, the political movement itself in the country has remained more or less unconcerned with both the immediate and basic problems of the peasantry.

The Indian National Congress at its last Lucknow session declared that the misery and poverty of the peasantry is "fundamentally due to the antiquated and repressive land tenure and revenue system". Indeed, the fundamental cause that makes for their present starvation is the land tenure and revenue and credit system which is nothing else but a device perfected by British Imperialism to wring out of the peasants the utmost that can be got out of them without actually killing them. It is this that must be immediately abolished before any other constructive measures aiming at the welfare of the peasantry can be undertaken.

Our objectives may not be possible of realisation under the present system of Government. Yet the peasants, if they are to save themselves from utter ruin, must fight to secure them. The system of Government must go if it stands in the way as it undoubtedly does. This is how the struggle of the peasantry merges into its fight for *swaraj*. It is for this reason that the Kisan Conference had declared the resolve for complete independence. In this manner do the Kisan and political movements become inter-dependant, the strength of the one adding to that of the other.

Under these circumstances it is essential that a *political movement* must be developed in our country as to draw its main strength and inspiration from the peasantry. It must also strive for the removal of all those obstacles that stand in the way of a true and lasting solution conducive to the fullest well-being of the agricultural masses of the country. The peasants' fight for bread and land is linked up with the national fight for political freedom.

The Kisan Sabha means the unity of the peasants. All our peasants must combine to fight the forces that are driving them deeper into misery and poverty. By organising the peasants, by setting them on their feet, the Kisan movement not only enables them to put a stop to the thousand and one harassments and extortionate practices of the landlords and land revenue officers and Sowerars and their agents, but also advances them greatly towards the goal of political freedom, thereby strengthening as nothing else can the movement for national independence.

Fortunately, the Kisans all over the country are becoming more and more conscious, politically and economically, of their basic problems. The All-India Kisan Committee is an expression of this awakening among the peasantry. They have at last realised that they must fashion out their own militant class organisations if they are to make any sustained advance towards their goal. The Kisan Sabha represent not only the ryots, the tenants and the landless labourers but in some places the petty Zamindars. In other words it represents and speaks and fights for all those who live by the cultivation of the soil. All these different strata among the Kisans will have to combine and fight for the removal of all the fetters imposed by British Imperialism and its allies the landlords. In short, they must fight for complete National, Socio-economic Independence. India, a Dependency of Britain, must be transformed into free, progressive and Democratic India of the masses. The fight for such an Indian can only effectively be conducted on a programme based on the grievances and demands of the Kisans of India.

While the fight for these basic changes goes on, the peasants must also fight for all that can be gained within the framework of the existing economic order. Only in this manner can they prepare themselves for the bigger struggle, the objective of which must be kept ever present in the minds of the Kisans.



To this end, we frame the following charter of fundamental and minimum demands of our Kisans, the Provincial Kisan Sabhas having the right to supplement it by a list of their local needs :

#### Fundamental Demands

1. Whereas the present system of Zamindari (U. P. Orissa, Bengal, Behar, Madras, and Assam) Talukdari (U. P. and Gujerat) Malguzari (U. P.) Iqtimardari (Ajmer) Khotes (Deccan) Zamis (Malabar) Inamdars, involving as they do the vesting of ownership of vast areas of land and of the right of collecting and enjoying enormous rent income, is iniquitous, unjust, burdensome and oppressive to the Kisans, And whereas the Zamindars, etc., rack-rent their crores of tenants while neglecting the irrigation sources,

All such systems of landlordism shall be abolished, and all the rights over such lands be vested in the cultivators and these Kisans made to pay income tax like the Ryotwari ryots.

2. Whereas the present systems of land-revenue and resettlement imposed by Government in Ryotwari areas have proved too vexatious and resulted in the progressive pauperization of peasants, all such systems of land revenue and resettlement shall be abolished and replaced by a graduated land-tax upon net incomes of Rs. 500 and more (for a family not exceeding five) (as also recommended by the Taxation Enquiry Committee).

3. Whereas the peasants have been over-burdened by oppressive rural indebtedness and the usurious rates of interest,

Whereas the lands of most of the peasants have either passed or are passing into the hands of absentee landlords, sowcars and urban classes,

The peasants shall be completely relieved from all liability to pay their old debts or interest thereon and the State shall immediately put into operation the necessary machinery to provide agricultural credit for peasants' current needs.

4. This Committee demands that landless peasants and those having less than five acres each be provided with land to cultivate on the basis of co-operative farming (without the right of alienation) and since one-third of the total cultivable land is still unoccupied and vested in Government and landlords, this Committee resolves that all such lands be granted to the landless Kisans.

#### Minimum Demand

The Peasants will immediately take all possible steps to achieve the following minimum demands :—

1. Cancellation of all arrears of rent and revenue.

2. Abolition of all Land Revenue Assessment and rent from uneconomic holdings.

3. Reduction by at least 50 per cent of rent and revenue and also of water rates ; and in no case shall the rent charged by landlords be more than what the Ryotwari ryots have to pay to Government in the neighbouring District or Province under similar circumstances ; and in regard to the tenants of the proprietary ryots suitable tenants legislation must be passed for their relief.

4. Immediate grant of the right of permanent cultivation without the right of alienation to all tenants and actual cultivators of the lands of Zamindars, Talukdars, Inamdars, Malguzars, Istimardars, Zamis, Khotes, etc.

5. To grant of the right of remission of rent for all tenants of landlords whenever crops fail and to stop all resettlement operations and all kinds of enhancements of the rent or land revenue and to survey and settle all the Zamindari, etc., lands.

6. To immediately impose an adequate and graduated income-tax, death duty and inheritance tax upon all the agricultural revenues of landlords and merchants.

7. Abolition and penalisation of all feudal and customary dues and forced labour, including Begar and illegal exactions.

8. The declaration of a 5 years' moratorium for all agrarian indebtedness.

9. An immediate enquiry to be made into the extent of repayment of the principal borrowed, interest thereon and the assessment of the assets and liabilities of the peasants.

10. Freedom from arrest and imprisonment for inability to pay debts, rents and revenue.

11. Immunity from attachment for all minimum holdings, stables, living quarters, household necessities, dairy and other cattle in execution of civil decrees and revenue and rent demands.

12. Rate of interest, charged by private money-lenders not to exceed 5 p. c. compound interest being penalised.

13. All money-lenders shall be licensed.

14. State credit, Co-operative and Land Mortgage credit shall be advanced, at not more than 5 per cent simple interest and for 40 years and Land Mortgage Banks shall be established everywhere.

15. To lower the freights upon the transport of agricultural commodities and third class railway rates and the development of canal and road transport.

16. Abolition of all indirect taxes, particularly duties on salt, kerosene, sugar, tobacco and matches.

17. Introduction of one pice post card.

18. Prohibition of dumping of food products.

19. Stabilisation of prices of agricultural products at 1929 level by the necessary adjustment of exchange and currency policy and other methods.

20. The customary rights of peasants and workers to secure forest produce (grazing and timber fuel) must be safe-guarded, the grazing fees abolished and the regulation of grazing and distribution of timber in forests to be vested in village Panchayats and the tanks, rivers, etc., therein freely thrown open to their cattle and peasants given licenses for bearing firearms to protect themselves, their cattle and crops from wild animals and made immune from prosecution for killing such animals and penalise private punishment inflicted on them by landlords for killing such animals.

21. The administration of all communal lands, howsoever originated, and grazing lands (Dochar) shall be vested in village Panchayats.

22. A peasants' Union Act must be enacted to safeguard their fundamental rights by collective action.

23. Minimum Wage shall be assured and the Workmen's Compensation Act be extended to all agricultural workers.

24. To so redistribute the burden of taxation both Provincial and Central jointly or variously as to impose at least 75 per cent of the tax-burden upon the richer classes and to so redistribute the public expenditure as to spend and devote 75 per cent of it for the welfare of workers and peasants.

25. To compulsorily fix a minimum fair price for sugar-cane on a rising scale to give the fullest benefit of Sugar Protection Act to Kisans and to suitably protect the cultivators of jute and cocconut by fixing a minimum price.

26. To develop co-operative and State marketing and thus prevent the exploitation of peasants by middlemen and to abolish all kinds of "Charity" deductions made by merchants and transference of all such present funds to the Peasants' Associations.

27. To develop the irrigation and drainage facilities for protecting peasants from famine, and to take all other steps to insure peasants against such calamities and to establish Tank Restoration Funds in all the areas of landlords, pay adequate contributions to finance, adequately and timely repairs and improvements of all irrigation and water supply sources.

28. To develop garden and intensive cultivation to supply cheap and tested seed and useful fertilisers to popularise the latest methods of cultivation and to carry on the agricultural and industrial operations of the State in close consultation and co-operation with the Kisan Sabhas.

29. To provide cattle insurance, fire-insurance and health insurance.

30. To establish a Village Panchayat for the administration of the civic affairs of every village and to entrust to it the function of distribution of irrigation water supply.

31. To empower the Kisan organisations, as in the case of the Sarda Act, to bring to book all those officials (particularly of the P. W. D. Excise, Revenue, Railway and Police) who take bribes from peasants and workers and so exempt the peasants and workers who are obliged to give bribes from any penal punishment.

32. To pass an Agricultural Insolvency Act.

33. Adult franchise and functional representation in all legislatures.

34. Repeal of all anti-peasant, anti-labour and anti-national laws, ordinances and regulations in British and Indian India and the release of all Kisan labour and political prisoners whether sentenced or detained without trial.

35. Re-instatement of all peasants deprived of their lands, etc. owing to their participation in the movements for their economic and political freedom and also owing to their failure to pay revenue or rent during this economic depression.

36. Immediate establishment of free and compulsory education for girls and boys, medical and sanitary aid, provision for drinking water and a national housing policy.

37. To grant the right to all peasants to bear arms.

### The All India Kisan Bulletin

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, the General Secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha, addressed the following letter of instructions to Kisan workers and organisers in the country :—

The All-India Kisan Congress held at Faispur restated and emphasized the fundamental and minimum demands of the peasants and further expressed its opinion that they could be best achieved by advancing the day to day struggle of the Kisans through the medium of their class organisations.

With a view to guide the Kisan workers all over the country in their work of aiding and organising the Kisans in their daily struggle against economic exploitation and political oppression, the following detailed instructions are now being sent to all kisan comrades, provided that they will have the right to choose their own practical line of action, in close conformity with the spirit underlying these instructions, but in harmony with the varying local circumstances from time to time.

(1) First and foremost the kisan worker must help the kisans in their daily disputes with the Government. These relate to the valuation of the crops in ryotwari areas, the suspension and remissions of land revenue and lowering of water rates and timely supply of irrigation water and timely repairs of irrigation works, wherever irrigation work is supplied by the Government. In regard to all these a Kisan comrade must help the peasants in pressing Government by all legitimate means.

(2) In the event of revenue revision or resettlement being ordered by Government, Kisan comrades should collect all possible detailed materials re crops, production, gross and net incomes from land etc. and submit it to the settlement officer and to the higher Kisan Committees and should carry on a vigorous propaganda for preventing Government from imposing additional taxation and for reducing the existing rate of taxation.

(3) In as much as to-day the land revenue burden has become unbearable due to the fall in prices, it is essential that immediate steps must be taken to ask Government on behalf of cultivators of the village to revise the land revenue in a lower direction, to familiarise peasants, with the provisions of the Civil Procedure Code so as to enable them to delay the payment of revenue long enough for them to realise money by the sale of their produce and pay the kist, without undergoing any great hardship and to prevent Revenue officials from coercing peasants by taking advantage of the peasants' ignorance.

(4) In time of famines or floods, an enquiry should be made into the sufferings of peasants, their needs specified and demands formulated and protection from Government and public sought for the suspension of land revenue of "tascafi" dues and debts.

(5) Inquiries must be set on foot by every village and Taluka Peasants' Committee to collect information regarding land tenure, wells, canal dues, pasture and grazing lands etc., incidence of direct and indirect taxes upon peasants and proper publicity obtained for it in the local press.

(6) In the Zamindari areas, the Kisan comrades must get Kisans to ask the Government and Zamindars to assot revenue on the lands that they cultivate according to ryotwari areas, and to get their lands properly surveyed and settled, their tanks repaired; and on the basis of the great difference between the Government land revenue assessment and the rent exacted by the Zamindar, a persistent campaign for the lowering of the rent and repairs of tanks and the granting of remission ought to be carried on. In this struggle every provision of the Tenancy Laws, Revenue Codes etc. ought to be fully exploited and an offensive should be constantly launched on the Zamindars in the courts, before Government and through legislatures and by public agitation to force them to discharge their duties at least as laid down by the Laws of the land.

(7) Furthermore the tenants must be warned against signing printed lease forms which in addition to rent, make all sorts of other demands, indicate wrong or bigger areas in any patta or stipulate any onerous conditions.

(8) Illegal exactions of any kind must be legally fought and the Zamindars and the landlords must be prosecuted in test cases.

(9) As far as possible, collective bargaining by the tenants of one landlord must be promoted in order to obtain better terms for all and collective consultation before any action is taken by any group of peasants must be insisted on.

(10) Rights on trees in the fields, and rights of free grazing and fuel and thatching straws and leaves, rights over all communal grounds and properties must be safeguarded, insisted upon and secured.

(12) Tenants, whenever their demands are refused, or who are otherwise oppressed in any manner, should be asked to take the most effective collective action decided upon locally.

(13) An enquiry must be instituted in every village regarding the conditions, extent and incidence of suffering of the serf or slave labour and reports submitted to the higher committees and Government, and legal and other actions taken to abolish such serf labour.

(14) So far as the rich peasants or intermediaries who also rent out lands for cultivation are concerned, Kisan comrades must see to it that every lease is carefully scrutinised and collective bargaining promoted and the scale of rents lowered and rack-renting prevented.

(15) Tenants should be advised to refuse to cultivate the soil or to pay the rent wherever tenants do not have the permanency of tenure of right or alienation, until all disputes are settled between the landlord or the intermediary and his tenants.

(16) Wages and conditions of work of the farm labourer must be inquired into and every opportunity must be utilised to effect improvement in their conditions by negotiating with the peasants and by assisting their organised strike against zamindars and planters.

(17) In so far as the money-lender or the sowcar is concerned, the Kisan worker must scrutinise and examine all accounts and interest charges and lease papers concerning indebted Kisans and do everything possible to negotiate for the lowering of interest rates and exempting of a portion of the accrued debt.

(18) Collective resistance may be offered to high interest charges, and if necessary and advisable, social boycott adopted against the arrogant and unreasonable sowcars and their shops boycotted to bring them to reason. Legal assistance ought to be offered to all indebted peasants and in order to escape from the unconscionable clutches of money-lenders, the Kisan workers should try their level best to see that co-operative and "sacavi" credit is provided for all peasants.

(19) So far as the merchant is concerned, the villages must fight for proper weights and measures and prevent illegal exactions in kind or cash being made by the merchant or the sowcars under whatever pretext it may be.

(20) As far as possible collective fixing of the fair price of agricultural produce ought to be obtained and co-operative sales must also be encouraged and grain markets organised for the purpose and information regarding the market prices broadcast from day to day or week through public meetings and other means.

(21) In so far as canal rates are concerned, the villagers should be collectively asked to approach the Government to lower canal dues in order to bring them in line with the fall in prices. Wherever no water is received, canal dues should be refused as long as it is legally possible to do so and authorities must be approached with a view to get them cancelled, and the revision of water rates must be demanded so that only such rates will be collected as will cover the investments upon irrigation projects.

(22) A fight must be carried on to get remissions of all canal rates in times of famine, drought, cyclone and floods.

(23) The distribution of water between several villages should be settled by peasant committees of the villages concerned and the irrigation officers ought to be influenced to obey their decisions, except under extraordinary circumstances when such disputes ought to be referred to irrigation advisory committees consisting of officials and representatives of the village committees.

(24) Arbitrary and unjust orders of the irrigation officers must be scrutinised and exposed and brought to the notice of the superior authorities and bribery when found among such officers ought to be put down by every legitimate means.

(25) The monopoly of canal waters by sugar companies and other concerns and individuals must also be opposed and the rights of ordinary peasants must be asserted by agitational and legal means.

(26) In so far as forests are concerned, free grazing and free fuel, bamboo and timber rights must be insistently demanded by the kisans and vigorous agitation carried on for the purpose and the exorbitant compounding fees now prevailing lowered, and the arbitrary and coercive methods and corruption found among forest officers put down.

(37) Special attempts ought to be made to put down bribery and corruption among all the officers of Government and landlords and co-operative and local self-Government movements.

(38) Peasants' Marches ought to be organised both to the peasants' conferences and local and district and higher authorities to create a mass consciousness among the kisans and to awaken the authorities to the realisation of the collective demands of peasants.

(39) Minimum and fair prices for Sugar cane, Jute, Cotton, Rice, Wheat, Ground-nuts, and other crops must be sought to be established especially whenever and wherever protection is granted to the manufacturers interested in those crops.

(40) Everything proper and possible should be done to undermine the influence of the power of landlords, Sahukars and other exploiting classes, and for this purpose, every kisan comrade ought to try to strengthen the kisans as against landlords and sowcars and prevent the alienation of their lands, and auctioning of their properties and cattle etc.

(41) It is the duty of every kisan comrade to continually familiarise the Charter of the Fundamental and Minimum Demands among the Kisans and for this purpose, he ought to utilise every fraternal platform.

(42) It is imperative that the awakening and rising political consciousness amongst the Kisans should be crystallised in concrete organisational forms if the struggle of the Kisans is to be carried forward without the least possible delay to a successful end. Therefore I exhort all Kisan workers to strive to their utmost to cover the length and the breadth of the land without a net work of Kisan organisations with mass memberships which will form the basis of the future fight for political and economic emancipation of the Kisans.

(43) Kisan comrades must encourage the holding of Kisan fairs and sports as well as agricultural exhibitions from the Kisan point of view along with Kisan conferences to promote intelligent appreciation of their own interests and needs through recreational channels.

(44) Mass singing of Kisan and national songs must be promoted in order to intensify the solidarity and militancy of the Kisans.

# Provincial Political Conferences

## The U. P. Provincial Political Conference

29th Session—Barilly—22nd November 1936

### Welcome Speech

The twenty-ninth session of the U. P. Provincial Political Conference was held at Barilly on the 22nd November 1936 under the presidency of *Sh. Narendra Dev*. In his speech welcoming the delegates, *Sh. Damodar Swarup* said that the time had come for them to understand that the leadership of the movement for independence was not safe in the hands of the middle class who dominated the Congress at present.

*Sh. Damodar Swarup* reiterated that the aim of the Congress was complete independence of the country; there could be no going back now from this position and no compromise on the point was possible. This made mass contact absolutely essential for them. It was their duty to teach the masses to organise themselves. They should also assure them that the Congress would take no rest till it had freed them from their miseries and privations.

Discussing the chance of the Congress at the forthcoming elections, Mr. Seth felt sure that the Congress would sweep the polls and hoped that every voter would fulfil his duty by voting for Congress candidates. As regards the question of office acceptance, he was of the opinion that in the present circumstances it did not behoove the Congress to accept the offices. To accept offices under the new constitution would be an insult to the self-respect and good name of the Congress. He also feared that by adopting such a course they would be led astray from the goal of complete independence and would involve themselves in petty constitutional tangles and complications. It was also possible that by acting against their own principles they must lose the sympathy of the masses.

In the course of his presidential address, *Acharya Narendra Dev* said :—

'We are wedded to a great cause. We are not merely members of a political organisation but are fighters for freedom. Our mission is to lay the foundation of a new state.'

'Our task is not merely to end imperialism but also other institutions and organisations which are exploiting the poor. We are out to create a civilisation which has its root in ancient culture, in which all the useful ingredients of ancient civilisation will be maintained and which will include all the progressive modern civilisation. We want to place a new ideal before the world.'

'Not only in India but throughout the world there is going on at present a conflict between reactionary and progressive forces. This is a common spectacle to be seen everywhere. Capitalism has reached the height of its development with its concomitant evils. The entire machinery of production and distribution has been dislocated and now the situation is beyond the control of capitalists. Therefore, capitalism is unable to fight its own problems. Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism. Our object is to demolish both capitalism and imperialism.'

'When our task is so great and our mission so high and sublime, we can ill-afford to fritter away our energies on trivial questions. We ought to ignore the petty questions which are likely to mislead us and involve us in the pursuit of illusory objects. We should always keep in mind our high aims.'

'We shall have to strengthen our organisation and include peasants and labourers in large numbers.'

Continuing *Acharya* said : 'We must also think and deliberate over the condition of our peasants'. Detailing figures, he said that there were about five crores of Kisans in the country, while there had been an increase of about 40 lakhs of persons dependent on agriculture. The acreage of land had also consequently decreased which had forced many of them to go to other parts of the country and some even to foreign countries. The other effect had been the fragmentation of the land. It had become

now unprofitable to do cultivation. He continued to narrate the present position of the peasants and said that they were in an awful plight. The poverty of the peasants was continuing to increase and with it he was sinking all the more into indebtedness. Nearly 40 per cent. of the peasants and small landholders were presented down heavily on account of indebtedness to the Mahajans and were literally their slaves. They would be unable to pay their debts all their life. No doubt there had been effort on the part of the Government to help the peasants, but it was not sufficient. It was necessary that the State should lend money to the peasants at a very low rate of interest. The work of the co-operative societies in this province had been always unsuccessful.

The President dwelt on the development of labour unions tracing their growth from the commencement of the great war. The Congress leaders ought to direct more attention to labour organisations and cooperate with the Trade Union Congress. The anti-Imperialist front would thereby be considerably strengthened. The field is very wide, but it lacks workers.

He then discussed at length the purpose of going to the Legislatures. He said that safeguards had left nothing for them. The constitution was most defective, while no thought had been given to the peasants. The Congress had clearly stated that it was not only sending its representatives to the Legislatures to make the constitution unworkable but to oppose it and mend it. This had also been made clear in the election manifesto. The various provincial organisations were enquiring into the agrarian problem as it affected them. The Congress would also make a comprehensive survey and a policy regarding it by the Congress would be shortly declared.

#### OFFICE ACCEPTANCE

Concluding he said: 'The country hopes for a good deal from the Congress and if we accept ministries without attaining full powers it would be nothing short of betrayal. The people too would be deceived and led to believe that there is something in the constitution which is good and therefore, the Congressmen are accepting offices. The acceptance of offices would imply that we have become a part of the imperialistic machine and the mentality of the people would be gradually against us. I hope that our provincial representatives would save us from this danger at the Faislar Congress.'

#### Resolutions

After the address a resolution of condolence on the demise of Mr. Chuni Lal Kahar was passed, all standing.

The second resolution expressing felicitations at the release of Mr. M. N. Roy was also put by the Chair.

Mr. Mohan Lal Saxena next moved what he called the main resolution of the conference. This resolution welcomed the decision of the All India Congress Committee relating to the entry by Congressmen in the reformed legislature.

By this resolution the attention of the people in these provinces was drawn to the policy adopted by the Government towards the coming elections which was one of interference by officials. In this connection particular reference was made to the notorious Court of Wards circular and to the refusal of removing disqualifications on certain Congressmen who were being put as candidates. The resolution was seconded and supported and passed unanimously. The conference then adjourned.

## The Assam Provincial Political Conference

### Fourth Session—Tezpur—6th December 1936

We

The Fourth Session of Assam Provincial Political Conference was held at Tezpur on the 6th December 1936 under the Presidency of *Sri Bhulabhai Desai*. Welcoming the delegates to the Conference *Sri Shao Kumar Das*, Chairman of the Reception Committee described the condition of the peasants in Assam.

He said that the economic condition of the ryots had been in a state of progressive deterioration. Burdened with debt of about 25 crores of rupees, as estimated by the Assam Banking Enquiry Committee and with the agricultural prices on the decline, the ryots had fallen on evil days. After hard toil in the fields, their income was not sufficient to meet the demands of the state. He quoted from a speech of His Excellency Sir Michael Keane, Governor of Assam how His Excellency was compelled by the abject misery of the people, to take steps by way of remission of land revenue to the extent of 3 annas in the rupee, which was enhanced by 5 annas in the rupee a few years ago.

"To-day," continuing he said, "more than a lakh of people in Assam have to go without food every day. Why with Nature so beneficent they had to remain in such a state of depredation? Why the peasants in other lands can afford to take their farm produce in motor to the markets for sale and why the peasants here have to meet untimely end under the passing motors?"

"After more than a century of the British rule, why they are still far behind the march of nations? Why Russia and Italy, that a few decades ago, in point of literacy, were not much ahead of us, could to-day make wonderful strides in the path of progress?"

Describing the state of Russia quoting from Maurice's "Red Bread" and describing how Italy had taken care of the peasants by distributing agricultural loans to the extent of 68 and a half crores at 2 and a half per cent interest and expending 18 and a half crores of rupees on motor tractors annually, etc., he said that it was possible only because the political power was in the hands of the people.

"In this land of ours," he proceeded, "political power is in the hands of foreigners, who take away the largest share of the revenue for their own aggrandisement. According to a statement made by Sir Laurie Hammond, late Governor of Assam, two-thirds of the revenue is spent on the salaries of the officialdom. According to Prof. K. T. Shah, the famous Indian Economist, 224 tax-payers have to carry the burden of a single European official on the average. When after a century of the British rule, less than 10 per cent of the people can only read and write, how many hundreds of years will it take to attain a cent per cent literacy? Will they have to wait till eternity?"

He urged the peasants to be self-reliant and under the leadership of that Saint of Sabarmati to work for the liberation of the motherland. "The economic problem of the ryots—the economic problem of the country can never be solved without the attainment of national independence," declared the speaker.

Turning to the duty of the people at the ensuing elections he urged that they should vote for the Congress, only because for more than half a century the India National Congress had been labouring for the freedom of the motherland. "Congress was the only institution," he said, "which represented the nationalist urge of the Indian people and their desire to put an end to exploitation by British Imperialism."

Dwelling on acceptance of office by the Congress S. J. Das said, "Acceptance of office of which much fuss is made by some, is a matter of less importance. With shackles of 'individual direction' and 'individual judgment' by the Governors of the province, the ministers under the new act are helpless and pitiable creatures with no control over the services and very little control over expenditure. Though the All India Congress Committee has postponed the decision about acceptance or non-acceptance, the Assam Provincial Congress Committee have taken bold lead for acceptance because the situation in the province demands it."

Lastly calling upon the people to rally under the banner of the Congress he said that thousands of people here—mostly peasants, men and women—have suffered and are still suffering silently to realise their dream of independence.

#### The Presidential Address

In the course of his presidential address, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai at once paid a tribute to the late Nabin Chandra Bardoloi, who was Assam's member of the Legislative Assembly. He was a man of most vivid personality, bounded energy, a man of faith, a man of courage and a man of sacrifice. He spoke with efficiency and strength of a lion among men. Much as we miss to-day, I must congratulate you on the moral atmosphere that the Congress created in this Province in that the vacancy which was created by reason of his timely death was filled by his successor, my friend Mr. Kaladhar Chakraborty, with any opposition.



Continuing, Mr. Dossal said: The first and last objective which the Congress stands for is complete independence for our Motherland. There are others in the country who in order only to distinguish themselves from us believe that it would be better to have a lower aim in the hope and belief that that is going to distinguish them from ourselves, to enable them to acquire the allegiance of a small, faint-hearted section of the Indian people. For there is no other country on the face of this earth where even a question can arise whether freedom and independence can admit of any qualification; for qualified freedom is no freedom and qualified independence is a moonshine. Therefore, we of the Congress will always maintain that the struggle on which we have entered we hope to carry into fruition under the guidance of God either in our lives or in those of our children, for freedom's battle once begun is always handed down from sire to son.

The next thing that I want to remind you of is the method by which the Congress hopes to achieve its goal, and that is through Satyagraha and Ahimsa. There are many who ask the question whether any non-violent struggle has ever resulted in the freeing of nations. It is necessary to analyse this idea in order to understand that we are not adopting Ahimsa and Satyagraha as our principles by reason either of want of courage or want of decision. We cannot attain our goal by any other method more efficiently. In order to understand why we stand for Ahimsa, I want you to bear in mind the conditions of the world to-day.

Science has progressed very rapidly in the world of to-day. The knowledge that God endowed to man for the amelioration and progress of humanity is being now used intensively and extensively for the purpose of producing means of destruction. The intellect which was given to man in order that he may be superior to the animals is almost likely to turn into a course to humanity. For, examine the actual military preparations of any country of Europe, examine the amount of money they are spending on what they believe is a protection against war and a guarantee for peace, but which only involve increasing means of destruction.

To-day the oceans and seas have ceased to be a source of protection for man, the great mountains of the world have ceased to be a source of protection and even the great fortresses of ancient days have become mere plaything and the world to-day awaits a war in which destruction will rain from the air and Europe may meet the fate which we read of in our Shastras of Pralayakal which appears to be only too near.

That is the condition of the world to-day. I want to remind you also of the last Great War which was fought only about 22 years ago and which lasted for a period of four years as the first great lesson for the application of the principles for which we as humanitarians stand to-day. Germany which lost the war submitted to every humiliating conditions, degrading herself from the position of a first rate world power to a second rate one. Now after a period of twenty years she has refused to recognise every single condition and restriction that was imposed upon her by the exultant winning allies.

The moral of it all is this: that in a war of force the victor becomes later the vanquished, and the vanquished waits for an opportunity to become the victor in his turn and the whole process is a vicious circle of changing places and destroying more and more at each successive effort.

We of the Congress, therefore, sincerely believe that the world will not accept the principles for which we stand by persuasion, it will be compelled to adopt them as a necessity. The only solution of the world's present condition is a co-ordination of a fellowship of races based upon mutual hostility and desire for rapid mutual destruction. Among us, therefore, there is room only for men and women who stand for complete independence and its attainment through truth, non-violence, non-cooperation.

I could after the restatement of our principles which require restatement to convince the faltering minds and faint hearts to the present actual situation in which the Congress finds itself after the postponement of Satyagraha. There are many among those who govern us to-day who, in order that we may suffer still from the complex from which we are reviving, say that the civil resistance of the Congress has failed. You must remember that whether it is a struggle of force or whether it is struggle of non-violence, or for that matter in any human struggle, the time must arrive when for want of means, for want of enthusiasm, due to considerable amount of suffering or due to inequality of preparations, the postponement of a struggle becomes a necessity, though only for the moment. Does it mean that when after five years' war of force Germany submitted to a defeat that she lost faith in

himself / Does it not mean that in the Civil Resistance Movement, after four years of struggle with the most powerful power in the world to-day, we have stopped to take a deep breath in order only that we may revive the struggle—if ever it is needed?

Germany to-day is stronger in heart and has once more re-established her equality among the races. Always during intervals when a struggle is suspended it behoves us to take stock as to how and where we began and what progress we have made. Satyagraha has survived ridicule and contempt and has now arrived at a stage when with all the powers, means and authority of those who govern us, it has entered the stage of an equal struggle. Our four years of struggle is no longer a matter of laughter or ridicule; it is no longer a matter of contempt.

The matter reached such a grave crisis when perhaps for the first time in the world history a representative of a nation, Mahatma Gandhi, signed an equal terms agreement with the representative of the greatest power, Lord Irwin, himself. Those who believe that Satyagraha had not any strength, had not any power, had not any life in it, had better wait and pause and consider what is the true significance of an equal agreement between a representative of men engaged in a non-violent struggle and a representative of the most powerful Imperialist Power in the world to-day means. We who were counted in 1920-21 as a few thousand were in the years 1930-33 and 33 a hundred thousand on the admission of our opponents themselves, and if the Government had arrested every man and woman who defied their authority, there was not room enough in ten times the number of jails at the disposal of the Government.

Therefore, taking a stock of our past, it is obvious that the movement has progressed with a geometrical progression and has come to stay, unless discretion is regarded as the better part of valour by those who govern this country to-day in the matter of our self-government.

The biggest and most enduring gain of the last Satyagraha struggle is the gain of confidence in ourselves and a faith in our cause without which no struggle can ever be carried on. All our future steps therefore however small they may be must be taken with great caution, with great care and with great circumspection so that we may not deviate from the principle and so that we may not lose the benefit of the gains that we have made during the last 15 years.

Along with this we must next consider our political situation as resulting to-day from the last 15 years. The most important point to consider in its relation is the fact that our movement for freedom and demand for self-government is a part of the world movement which began in the year 1914. I do not wish to occupy you with all that happened since that year, but I will remind you of this that when England's freedom was threatened the hundred thousand soldiers of India were multiplied into a million and it was with their assistance that the onslaught of Germany was held up, which but for the great wall erected by our soldiers would have swept England and France in no time. It was in those days of need that England and English statesmen made promises to India that if they ever love the war you would be a free nation. But after the war was won, the fulfilment of that promise was broken in a manner which has now become a matter of history. They introduced what they pretended was a free Government in this country by what was called the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the result of which you see in the government of every province by the puppets of those who have still the power in their hands.

After several years of second labour they have now produced another rat. Therefore, it is not surprising that you should be reminded once again that the Indian National Congress has already passed a resolution rejecting the constitution which is offered to this country and this rejection is not merely a matter of words. It is a matter of faith and action. Therefore, no Congressman can look upon the present constitution as anything out of which real good can come to this country.

Mr. Desai then explained what the constitution is and continuing said:

Then some people ask: "Why is it that Congress having once resolved not to enter the legislatures are doing so now? There are three main reasons.

After the suspension of the Satyagraha struggle, Lord Willingdon claimed that he had reconquered India and that the people of India had lost faith in the Congress and its nominees. Sir Samuel Hoare was much more intelligent, much more discerning and was not willing to accept at face value this vain boast of the late Viceroy. Lord Willingdon, notwithstanding that advice to the contrary, insisted upon dissolving the Central Legislature in the hope and belief that by reason of the suppression of

our bodies and the privation of our means, he thought that he had also taken away what is much more precious—our faith in ourselves and those who suffer for us.

We then decided that we should go to the country in every constituency and take measure of the people's confidence in us and to demonstrate whether they stood for us or whether they stood for those who attempted to suppress us. It is now well-known that in every constituency we contested, the people's confidence in us was renewed and those who sold us during the time we were in jail were consigned to eternal shame, whatever other places of profit or pleasure they may occupy.

Therefore, whatever may be the phase of our struggle, we have decided in the light of past experience that we shall not let our enemies have this vantage ground where a foreign power through its instruments may declare that India is being ruled by its own representatives, nor shall we allow these instruments another opportunity to assist that Government in suppressing us. That is our justification.

We have proved during the last two years in the Central Legislature that they may govern us, but they are governing all the time against the will of the people, for out of about 40 important divisions which took place during the last two years in 39 the Government was defeated and in defeating the Government the majority of the Mussalmans, much to the disagreeable surprise of those who will not understand, joined us, without whom that majority was impossible. For, you must remember that out of the 144 members, 39 are nominated members, 51 are Europeans, that makes 90, 5 are land-holders, thank God, one of them is our man; that makes 95 and you must remember that if you want a majority you must get about 70 members. We shall, therefore, fill the Councils with true and loyal soldiers of the Congress in order only to oust those who are assisting foreign domination.

There is many a foolish man who imagines that there is logic in this matter of politics, that because we have entered the legislatures therefore we must carry on that policy to its bitter end. Our real and main purpose is to oust every opponent and to replace him by a loyal and devoted soldier of the Congress. We trust therefore the question of what is called office-acceptance which looms large in the minds of some men and women is but a trifle to be decided as circumstances require. As it is not a matter of principle and it is purely a matter of policy, it can be decided as circumstances require at the proper time. Naturally, to men of personal ambition, it must become a matter of principle, but not to those of us who are the only in the spirit of service.

We believe that the greatest requirement of a large organisation in order that it may live is the discipline of its soldiers and the belief in the wise judgment of its majorities. It is the essence of all representative institutions. It can only be the opinion of all. You will only begin to dig the grave of your dissolution if ever you allow any one of them, however high or great he or she may be to deviate from the path and mandate of the great organisation for which alone he or she must live and work. It is not a question of particular men and women. It is a question of principle. I speak with the utmost difference for those who differ from us but fancy two slaves fighting for independence between themselves in order only to re-establish their master. That is the tragic part of it.

These are questions which the Indian Congress at its sitting at Faispur will consider and pronounce its decision. If the Congress decides that the Congress itself or any other body of men shall decide any particular matter, it is travesty of words to call it indecision.

I congratulate you on having anticipated Faispur by holding your session in a village area.

## The Tamil Nadu Political Conference

38th. Session—Vellore—6th. December 1936

### Welcome Address

The thirty-eighth session of the Tamil Nadu Political Conference was held at Vellore, on the 6th December 1936 under the presidency of Mr. A. Vederatnam Pillai.

In the course of his welcome address, Mr. Abdul Gaffar Sahib, Chairman of the Reception Committee, said that the example of the deceased patriots should be

a source of great encouragement and inspiration to Congressmen and that they should not rest contented till India attained Swaraj. They should spread the Congress message in the nook and corner of villages. The Congress had suspended direct action and had taken to the policy of constitutional agitation and yet the Government was taking action against Congressmen in the Frontier Province and other places. This action of the Government in denying the legitimate rights of the people showed that India was a subject nation and therefore they should fight for the freedom of their country. They should not consider that the policy of council-entry meant co-operation with the Government. It only indicated a change of tactics in their fight for freedom. He was of opinion that through the councils, they could fight the Government successfully for the attainment of freedom. He was of opinion that so far as the Madras Presidency was concerned Congressmen, by accepting office, would be able to bring about a new constitution suited to the needs and welfare of the people.

#### The Opening Address

Mr. Yashwantrao Chavan, in opening the Conference, said :—

You are most opportunely meeting on the eve of the inauguration of the new reforms which will no doubt mark a turning point in the constitutional progress of India. The importance of the event is not due to anything in the Act itself but to the fact that the greatest national organisation of India is determined to lay hands on it with all the vigour it can command.

There are still prominent people in the Congress fold who are not reconciled to the new policy and while they give every encouragement and help to the members who are running the show, they keep themselves out of the legislatures and refuse to shoulder the responsibilities of working out the new policy of the Congress. There are also men who try to justify their changed attitude towards the new constitution by disingenuously interpreting the palpable co-operation in the terms of non-cooperation. Among the latter group is included the distinguished personality of our President Jawaharlal Nehru. While he was in Europe, he, against his personal inclination, endorsed the principle of Council-entry to make himself acceptable to the Congress as its President, but after swallowing the whole he is now straining at the tail of office-acceptance which is undoubtedly the natural corollary of Council-entry.

Fortunately for the stability of Indian politics, Gandhiji, in spite of his so-called retirement, continues to be its central figure and it is round him as a pivot that the national organisation of the Congress continues to revolve. Presidents come and Presidents go, but Gandhiji and his spirit go on for ever. If non-violence still prevails against sporadic attempts at terrorism, if communism and socialism do not find fertile soil in India, if capital and labour rationally realise and keep their respective portions in Indian economy, if there is no violent conflict between property and poverty, if there is no insurmountable misgiving in the rulers of Indian States towards British India in respect of the forthcoming Federation and, last but by no means least, if the minorities in India feel that British Raj can safely be replaced by Swaraj without detriment to their communal interests, it is because of the sound principles of Indian national policy that Mahatmaji has inculcated in, and the example of the correct attitude in all matters of cultural, social, religious and inter-communal importance that he had set to a growing section of right-minded Indian publicists and because of the general confidence that has been created in the Congress to a remarkable extent under Mahatmaji's lead.

The spirit requires further careful cultivation and future legislatures will provide most suitable fields to its fosterage. We cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that India was never so disunited as it is at present and it behoves the Congress leaders to be very circumspect where communal and class feelings are concerned.

Muslims are as much dissatisfied and even disgusted with the new Constitution as any of their fellow nationals and they have denounced it in no uncertain terms. Mr. Jinnah has given his assurance beforehand to all parties in the future legislatures that Muslims will give their whole-hearted support and co-operation to any party that sincerely and equitably works for the salvation of India. I want my fellow congressmen to so conduct themselves in the legislatures as to earn and deserve the confidence of a great limb of the Indian nation without whose co-operation India can never dream of attaining independence.

The only way of abolishing the Communal Award, as the British Government themselves have pointed out to us, is by bringing about a complete agreement among

the communities concerned. It must be said to our great shame that for want of proper leadership, representative spokesmen and a common platform and on account of communal distrust, there is no prospect of even proper attempts being made for communal reconciliation outside the legislatures.

If in working the new constitution in the course of the next two years due sense of responsibility in its true meaning and not in mere constitutional sense, is engendered in the different sections of the legislators and thereby inter-communal confidence and harmony is firmly established, God willing, I am positively certain that in an All-India Conference of Provincial and Federal legislators, a complete communal agreement on all constitutional issues can be brought about and a *modus operandi* for the realisation of the national goal can be determined upon. This is my proposition and method of destroying the new Constitution with a terrific explosion from within the legislatures and I prefer it to mere fireworks of deadlocks etc.

Towards this great end I want to exploit all the resources of the Congress that have become immense through the sustained mass movement inaugurated and piloted by Mahatmaji and you can now understand why I am nervously anxious that Congressmen should swamp all provincial legislatures like an overwhelming flood.

There are ample signs to show that Congressmen will be returned to the Madras Assembly in very large numbers and there can be no doubt that the longest single party in the Assembly will be that of the Congress. As there has been no party system in any of the provincial councils except Madras, Governors will choose, as they do now, their ministers from various groups and it is even probable that a European minister will be appointed in Bengal. Whereas the Governors' cabinets in other provinces will consist of a hybrid collection of men belonging to various parties of different outlook and clashing interests, the Madras Ministers will be members of a single party with a definite policy and programme. A Minister in a province refusing to give unqualified submission to the will and pleasure of his Governor will be liable to be dismissed at a moment's notice and the Governor will practically be ruling autocratically through his ministers. But in Madras the ministry could not be turned out of office except on the vote of the Assembly and the Governor will soon find that it was not his will but the will of the electorate that the cabinet will be bound to regard.

If only the Faizpur Congress will tackle the office-acceptance question in right earnest and come to the right decision and thus give Madras plenty of scope for the realisation of its ambition, we Madrasis, who in the words of H. E. Lord Erskine, are particularly "constitution-minded" feel ourselves quite capable of demonstrating to the rest of India and even to Great Britain that with the right alchemic spirit we can turn even this wretched constitution into an instrument of national liberty.

In conclusion, let me say a word to my co-religionists. Madras Mussalmans have a reputation for well-balanced judgment and they have often given lead to other provinces in crucial moments and the great Khilafat movement originated in Madras. We must take the peculiar circumstances of Muslim position in this Presidency into our consideration and take such a course of action as is calculated to promote the best interests of the community. A slight reflection will show that we can better obtain our ends by exerting our influence on our countrymen from within a national organization than by setting up a separate communal party of our own. Even what little hope you had of bolstering up a fictitious Islamic solidarity has been frustrated and history has been repeated in your case. Just as on the Montagu-Chelmsford visit an Islamic League was set up against the Madras Presidency Muslim League, and again on another occasion two leagues began to function simultaneously under the same name and the Government was put to the task of distinguishing one from the other by the different dates of their birth, true to these traditions two Muslim Parties have now come into existence and keen contest is expected between the candidates of the respective parties. If the leaders of the Muslim Parties feel that they have gone too far to think of changing their course, they should at least remove the ban and allow their members, after election on their tickets, to join the existing non-communal parties according to their personal bent of mind. The spectacle of one Muslim Party sitting aloof in the Assembly will be bad enough, but two Muslim Parties functioning side by side, or rather face to face, will be too unifying.

#### The Presidential Address

Mr. Vedaratnam Pillai, in the course of his presidential address which was in Tamil, said that Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliar was the fittest person to preside over the

Conference and he was elected to the presidential chair. Since he had declined that honour, the responsibility of presiding over the conference had fallen on his (Mr. Vedaratnam's) shoulders. He was only a soldier in the fight for India's freedom and when a vacancy rose in the front ranks to the army, it was his duty to fill it up. It was in that sense that he agreed to accept the responsibility and he, therefore, appealed to all Congressmen to co-operate with him in making the Conference a success.

The Congress, he continued, had been working for the past 50 years for the freedom of India and by its strenuous work it had raised the status of Indians in the nations of the world. The new Constitution was an unwanted one and it had not given satisfaction to anyone except few persons who always supported British Imperialism for safeguarding their own vested interests. India was becoming poorer and unemployment was increasing. Cut-throat competition in foreign trade and the manipulation of currency had added to India's ills. The introduction of the new Constitution would only make the administration more top-heavy and would not be helpful in reducing the heavy burden of taxation under which the people were groaning. Under these circumstances, the President asked how they could accept the new Constitution. Though they had refused to accept the Reforms, the Congress had decided that they should capture the legislatures under the new Constitution with a view to wrecking them. The electorate should, therefore, be educated. Propaganda should not merely be carried on with reference to the sacrifices of the Congressmen but every opportunity should be taken to explain to the electorate the aims and objects of the Congress. He was sure if such propaganda was carried on, the country would return Congressmen in very large numbers to the legislature.

The question of office acceptance, the President, proceeding, observed, seemed to be looming large in the eyes of Congressmen. But the All-India Congress Committee had decided to postpone the settlement of this question till after the elections. Therefore it was not necessary for them now to discuss the pros and cons of it. At the same time he would like to express his definite opinion that instead of reactionaries being put into office, he would be glad to see that stalwart patriots like Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari become Ministers. He was sure that such patriots would utilise the opportunity thus afforded to wreck the constitution. Whether office was accepted or not, it was the primary duty of the Congressmen to wreck the new Constitution.

The President next appealed to all Congressmen, workers and peasants, to present a united front for achieving the freedom of their country. They had to concentrate their attention on the amelioration of the lot of the agriculturists, fixing minimum wages for labourers and removal of unemployment and poverty in the land. He pleaded for the establishment of old age pensions, maternity benefits and for the introduction of compulsory and primary education. It might be asked how to find money for all these schemes. The Karachi Congress programme had shown the way. In this country, there was no need for any officer to be paid more than Rs. 500. The Congress Party in the Madras Corporation had carried out this pledge. Key industries like railways and electric schemes should be nationalised so that people might get the maximum benefit out of them.

Proceeding, the President referred to the communal problem and said that it would disappear the moment the country attained Swaraj. He made an appeal to communal leaders to devote their attention to securing independence and exhorted people to encourage khadi, industry and encourage the study of Hindi which would soon become the lingua franca of India.

The splendid example of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore, in throwing open all the State-managed temples to all classes of the Hindu community, would go a great way for the total abolition of untouchability.

He concluded his address with a strong plea for establishing Congress Sabhas in foreign countries in order to remove the disabilities of Indian settlers in those lands. He feared that the world situation would lead to a great crisis and stated that capitalistic and imperialistic forces were responsible for this situation. He hoped that India would not help such forces. The immediate task before the Congressmen was to bring victory to the Congress in the forthcoming elections and it was essential that all should contribute their mite to Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel's Fund.

# The Congress Socialist Conferences

## The Sind Congress Socialist Conference

### Presidential Address

The first session of the Sind Congress Socialist Conference was held at Karachi on the 19th. July 1938 under the presidency of Mr. M. R. Masani. Mr. Narsindas Beker, Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates. In the course of his address, Mr. Masani, the President said :—

"We meet to-day at a time when both in your province and in the country, we are in a state of transition, not towards the so-called new Constitution, but to a higher stage of evolution in our national struggle. In such a period there is bound to be difference of opinion and a lot of dust in the air which blinds the vision".

"We are very fortunate, however, in having in our midst to-day the President of the Congress, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, who has done so-much to clear the atmosphere since he took up the leadership of the country early this year. The splendid lead he gave to the country in his Presidential address at Lucknow, and the revival of mass interest in the Congress as a result of his tours and speeches has been an inspiration to us in these times of political depression and demoralisation. He enjoys to-day the affection and allegiance of the bulk of the common people of this country. We hope with confidence that the policies and programme which he has put before the country with a view to intensifying the national struggle will have the increasingly enthusiastic support of larger and larger numbers of people".

Dealing with the suggestion and reports that there is a split in the Congress and for which in certain quarters the Congress Socialist Party is held responsible, Mr. Masani said, 'I would like here to give an assurance that Socialists have no desire to divide the national ranks. On the contrary, we have already succeeded in getting for the National Congress the support, if it chooses to have it, of labour and peasantry to an extent not available hitherto. We Socialists are not guilty of any irrelevance, but rather of focussing attention on the very important question of how quickest and best to achieve Swaraj.'

Mr. Masani maintained that it was misleading to give the impression that the Congress was divided to-day on the question of what form of social order was to follow the establishment of independence in the country. Socialists certainly desired that the foundations of a Socialist society should be laid when the country had won its battle against foreign rule and to this end they would certainly form the platform of the party to popularize their ideas. But they did not seek to commit the Congress to any decision at this stage. What they had done was, on the one hand, to place before the Congress suggestions for a change in the methods of organisation and preparation for the struggle for independence and on the other hand, they had sought to stem the demoralising drift towards constitutionalism and compromise which had made itself felt in Congress politics since the unsuccessful conclusion of the civil disobedience movement of 1932-33.

The issue on which the country and the Congress were divided to-day was not the issue of Socialism but the issue of independence and the ways and means of achieving it. If there was division in the Congress to-day, it was not between the Socialists and the Nationalists ( a false classification because in a subject country all good Socialists also must be Nationalist ), but between two groups of Nationalists, each with a different scheme to achieve the common goal.

This position had been made clear by the proceedings of the Lucknow Congress, where the main divisions were not on Socialist issues at all but on other issues such as the Congress attitude towards the States Subjects, the manner in which the workers and peasants should be organised, etc.

Dealing with the new Mr. Masani regretted that the Lucknow Congress failed to arrive at a final decision on the important question of office acceptance. "What developments," he asked, "could conceivably happen to justify co-operation with this Government? Can it be that the possibility of a war was

present in the mind of the Working Committee ? And is it being suggested that a war would justify co-operation ? The very idea is ridiculous. Or is it that a gesture from the new Viceroy is being awaited. If so, it is a dangerous possibility."

"What then is the alternative policy of the left in the Congress propose for furthering the struggle for independence ? It is just a policy of deadlock ? The answer is clearly in the negative. Constitutional deadlocks will certainly serve the very useful purpose of bringing the sham constitution to a standstill land of forcing the Governors to rule dictatorially, thus tearing the thin veil of Democracy and revealing the stark realities of the situation. They would also make it necessary to drop altogether the inauguration of a sham Federation at the Centre. Deadlocks cannot, however, take us anywhere by themselves. They must be followed up by action, and where this is not possible, by preparation for action. India to-day is not in a phase of acute struggle but of preparation and in the immediate future the organisation has to be set up and the weapons forged. That is where perhaps for the first time the question of socialism comes in ; not indeed of socialism, but of the application of the technic and methods suggested by scientific socialism."

The Socialists felt that the two civil disobedience movements failed to achieve their objective because of inadequate mass response, not caused by lack of ingredients of a revolutionary situation but owing to the restricted nature of the appeal made by the Congress. The call of the Congress was to individuals and not to the masses. The peasant, for instance, could not understand what Swaraj would mean to him except in terms of bread. Unless, therefore, these classes could be organised on the basis of their immediate economic grievances and demands, they do not expect them to participate in sufficiently large numbers in a future struggle for Swaraj.

The immediate Socialist programme, therefore, if such it could be called, was the undertaking of the building up of powerful Kisan Sanghs and Trade Unions, which, while fighting for the raising of the level of existence of the exploited classes, could also be mobilised for action in times of national crisis.

Discussing nationalism in India, Mr. Masani said it should be controlled, developed and harnessed in the struggle against imperialism. Hitherto the Congress and the labour movement had worked independently of each other but the Lucknow Congress had sown the seeds of union between the two. Mr. Masani also stressed the need for India to take note of international developments in her nationalist struggle. In conclusion, he emphasised the need for India to make it clear that she will not participate in any war which England may declare against some foreign country to serve her own interests. He urged preparations to resist war must be started from now onwards.

#### Resolutions

The Conference asserted the right of Congressmen to free expression from the Congress platform of Socialist and other views which are in no way inconsistent with the Congress creed or objective.

In this connection, the opposition that has recently manifested itself against the lead given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at and since the Lucknow Session of the Congress as evidenced by the manifesto of the twenty-one businessmen of Bombay, shows inevitably that the vested interests in the country are ranging themselves openly against them.

The Conference sent greetings to the Arabs in Palestine on the fight that they are now putting up and hoped that they will keep up the fight till their objective of an Independent Palestine was achieved.

The Conference welcomed the gestures of co-operation made to the Congress by the All-India Kisan Conference and the All-India Trade Union Congress and hoped that the Congress will respond to those gestures and thus secure their co-operation. To this end the conference urged upon the Congress the grant of collective representation to organise peasants and workers in the country.

Whereas the Government of India Act 1935 in no way represented the will of the nation, the Conference endorsed the rejection by the Lucknow Congress of the new constitution in its entirety.

The Conference noted with deep concern the attempt of certain highly placed Congress leaders to whittle down the declared policy of the Congress of rejection of new constitution by agitating for acceptance of office and thus virtually dragging the Congress into the barren and futile path of co-operation.



The Congress regretted that the Lucknow Session did not put an end to this tendency by declaring categorically that no Congressman can accept ministerial offices under this Constitution and hoped that the next Congress Session would decide accordingly.

The Conference endorsed the resolution passed by the Congress at its Lucknow session on the subject of civil liberties.

In this connection the Conference strongly supported the action of the President of the Indian National Congress in prompting the formation of a Civil Liberties Union in the country.

The Conference was of the opinion that there was imminent danger of war following developments all over the world and urged non-participation of India therein.

The Conference condemned the action of the League of Nations in lifting the "Sanctions" imposed on Italy during the Italo-Abyssinian war and in refusing the demand of the Abyssinian Emperor for financial assistance for continuing the war against the imperialist aggression of Italy. This, in the opinion of the Conference, betrayed the utter importance of the League, in protecting the weaker nation against the aggression of more powerful ones.

The Conference therefore supported the move of Mr. Iyenger, Congress M. L. A., in sponsoring a resolution for the next session of the Indian Legislative Assembly demanding the withdrawal of India from the League.

The Conference noted with sympathy the rise of the Young Baluch National Movement and supported their demands for that measure of civic rights and local self-Government which obtain in other provinces of India.

## The Andhra Socialist Party Conference

### Welcome Address

The Andhra Socialist Party Conference met at Rajahmundry on the 26th. September 1936 under the presidentship of Mr. Yusuf Meherally of Bombay, Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party.

Welcoming the delegates to the Conference, Mr. K. Lingaraju, Chairman of the Reception Committee, explained the principles of Socialism and commended the efforts made by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru to popularise them in this country. Referring to Soviet Russia, Mr. Lingaraju said young men in India were reading avidly everything about the Soviet Union; but it was a mistake to suppose that the aim of reading Russian literature was to transplant Russia on Indian soil. The ideal of the Socialists was not to make India a pale copy of Russia but to involve from the Russian experiment a Government for India in accordance with her needs and aspirations. With this goal firmly in view what harm was there in our looking towards Russia for knowledge and inspiration? He enumerated certain prevailing "misconceptions" about Socialism and contended that Socialism did not aim at destroying individuals.

Adverting to the feverish war preparations now being made by the Powers and the imminence of a war, he said: "Our duty in such a crisis is plain. We should withhold assistance to the British Government. The National Congress has clearly defined its attitude in the event of a war breaking out. We must follow its lead. We cannot lend our support to the ignoble cause of imperialistic domination."

Turning to the new Constitution, he said our duty was to wreck it and this could only be done by developing mass-consciousness and organising the masses. The Indian National Congress had decided upon entering the councils with the express purpose of wrecking them. He could not say how far this was possible. The Congress Election Manifesto, though not a Socialistic document in its entirety, had a strong Socialistic bias. It was their duty to see that the Congress secured a thumping victory at the polls.

He condemned the policy of the Government towards Socialists, although Socialism was not a banned creed in the country. The Law courts had upheld its propaganda as legal. But yet the Government had been placing obstacles in their path. He re-

ferred to the ban on Mr. Mansani's entry into the Punjab and the security proceedings launched against Mr. P. Venkateswarlu of Bezvada.

In conclusion, he made few suggestions with a view to strengthening the Socialist party. He urged the establishment of workers' and Peasants' Unions, of study circles, etc.

#### The Presidential Address

Mr. Meherally then delivered his address.

At the outset, Mr. Meherally declared that the acceptance of offices, even for the wrecking of the Constitution, was highly undesirable. "The hunting of illusive paper majorities must inevitably lead to unholy alliances, to a watering down of policies and actions of the Congress with a consequent revulsion of popular feeling against it."

He then explained the Congress Socialist Party's agrarian programme. Describing the present plight of the peasantry, Mr. Meherally said among the leading countries of the world, India had the highest percentage of people dependant on agriculture and the lowest percentage of those employed in industries, transport and trade. This had not always been so. Scarcely half a century ago countries like France and Germany had more people dependent on agriculture than India. In the West, however, rapid industrialisation had reduced the pressure on land. In India exactly the opposite had been the case. One hundred and fifty years of British rule had resulted in the ruin of Indian trade and industries and had thrown a larger and larger proportion of the population on the soil. During the last half a century the situation had particularly grown acute. In 1881 the percentage of population depending on land was 88. In 1901 it had risen to 91.06 per cent, in 1901 to 96.5 per cent, in 1921 to 71.6 per cent and in 1931 to 73.9 per cent.

One of the most disquieting features, Mr. Meherally continued, had been a great increase in the number of landless labourers. In 1842, Sir Thomas Munro was able to report that there was scarcely any peasant in India who was without land. Thirty years later in the census of 1872, it was discovered that there was no less than 75 lakhs of peasants who were without land. In another half a century the census figures revealed that 291 out of every 1,000 peasants were compelled to work as labourers, most having no land of their own. The next census in 1931 showed that this number had increased to 407 out of every 1000, an increase of 40 per cent during the decade.

Referring to the zamindari system, he said zamindars in India were a creation of the British. In the time of the Moghuls there were just revenue contractors. It was not till the time of Lord Cornwallis that the zamindar was recognised as an absolute proprietor of the soil. Cornwallis specially created the zamindari class with the clearest intention of creating a body of middlemen, a group of people whose interests could be so inseparably bound with those of their foreign task-masters as to ensure continuous loyalty. This master stroke had only succeeded too well and the Indian zamindar to-day along with the Native Prince belonged to the most reactionary strata of the population. In the last elections to the Central Legislative Assembly, in all the landlord's provinces, the zamindars put up candidates against the Congress and did everything they could to see that the Congress candidate was defeated. The latest instance of their reactionary nature was furnished by the circular issued by the U. P. Court of Wards.

The liquidation of the debts of the ryots and the reform of the land revenue system were the other important items in the programme. During the last few years of depression, though the cultivator's income had fallen disastrously, the land revenue continued at very much the same figure as in the pre-crisis years, with a few grudging remissions here and there. In many places it had been established that the peasant did not make enough out of the land after deducting the expenses of cultivation even to pay the land revenue. Hence the insistence of the Congress Socialist Party that the present land revenue system, which apart from being inequitable was one of the, if not the most, important causes of debt, should be scrapped and replaced by a graduated income tax on agricultural incomes exceeding Rs. 500 a year. It was not at all unfair to ask for this as the income-tax limit in the urban areas was Rs. 2,000.

After tracing the growth of rural indebtedness, the peasant revolts in the past which were invariably directed against the money-lenders, the relief measures tried in some of the provinces and States of India, he asserted that the situation was well-nigh intolerable. The remedy was equally clear. It was the abolition of all

intermediaries between the State and the actual cultivator of the soil, the liquidation of the entire rural debt and the arrears of land revenue, and the scrapping of the present land revenue system and its substitution by a graduated income-tax on agricultural incomes over Rs. 500 a year. The Party, he went on, had now firmly addressed itself to the difficult task of kisan organisation. The All-India Kisan Committee had come into existence very largely at the instance of the Party and two of the three Secretaries of that body were their Party members, as also most of its provincial organisers. The outstanding fact in Indian politics since the Lucknow Congress had been the awakening among the peasants in India. The numerous Kisan Conferences which were being held in almost all the provinces bore witness to the wonderful response the peasantry had given to the appeal for organisation.

Proceeding, Mr. Meherally said, it was necessary for the sake of further maintaining the militant policy of the Congress and continuing the important task of lifting the country out of the morass of depression into which it had fallen, that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be re-elected Congress President for the coming year. No Congress President had during the few months of his term conducted himself with such distinction and with such happy results. His whirlwind tours in distant provinces had already created a new awakening and new activity in the country. The nine months between the Lucknow and the Faizpur Session of the Congress were hardly sufficient to enable any man, however inspired he might be, to transmit to the people his spirit and ideas in a country as big as India and with the apparatus of communication as limited as it was here.

Dealing with the international situation, the President said that Europe to-day had become an arena for the clash of two systems, the capitalist and the socialist system. Eighteen years after the Treaty of Versailles Europe was again arming itself more dreadfully with more destructive weapons of war to wipe out masses of population and was heading towards a catastrophe from which there seemed to be no escape. The clash of interests inside the capitalist system was sharpening so rapidly that every country was forced to spend more than half its revenues on the development of the war industry.

In the process of the sharpening of the internal conflict of capitalism, conflict of the two rival systems was sharpening at an equally rapid pace. In every country the progressive elements were closing up their ranks and arraying themselves against the forces of reaction, the monsters of war and Fascism. The radical forces had realised this need for unity after the experience of Germany. Socialism in European politics was emerging in a new phase. At the moment democracy in Spain was carrying on a life and death struggle with the Fascist rebels who from all available information were being well supported with arms, aeroplanes and money from the Fascist States of Italy and Germany. Our sympathies must naturally go to the people of Spain. The situation in Palestine was also becoming increasingly grave. He urged the Conference to send its greetings to the people of Spain and Palestine in their grim struggle for freedom.

#### Resolutions

A resolution condemning the repressive policy of the Government was moved by J. Ramalingam and seconded by Mr. M. Annapurniah. The resolution condemned in strong terms the policy of the Government in keeping in detention camps without trial thousands of young men in Bengal and other parts of the country, and placing behind iron bars some gentlemen as State prisoners for an indefinite period without trial. The Conference protested against the arrest of Mr. Ahmad of the Punjab and the disfranchising of Mr. Muzaffar Ahmad and 500 labourers of the Gital Kanger Union. The resolution further protested against the ban on many labour and peasant unions, youth leagues, the North-West Frontier Congress Committee, the All-India Communist Party, the Hindustan Seva Dal and other organisations. When the resolution was put to vote, it was carried unanimously. The Conference then adjourned.

## The Bengal Congress Socialist Conference

The second annual conference of the Bengal Congress Socialist party was held at the Albert Hall Calcutta on the 3rd. October 1936. In the absence of Mr. Bose

Meher Ali who was to arrive on the next morning, Mr. Jay Prakash Narain took the chair. The presidential address was delivered by Mr. Meher Ali on the next day when the Conference resumed its session.

After S. Sashindra Mohan Bhattacharya, Chairman of the Reception Committee delivered his address, greetings from the following organisations were read out : the B. P. C. C., Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress, Bengal Labour Party and the Youth League.

#### Resolutions

The report of the Party presented by the Secretary was accepted after some discussion. The following resolutions were then passed :

(1) This Conference condemns the action of the Bengal Government in applying the Public Security Act of 1932 to this session of the Bengal Congress Socialist Party because it regards such action as an illegitimate limitation of the right of an organisation to exercise its choice in admitting members of the public to its meetings and conferences.

(2) This Conference expresses its deep sense of loss to the cause of the working class and the anti-imperialist movement at the death of Maxim Gorky, Henry Barbusse and Saklatwala.

(3) This Conference also expresses its sense of loss to the freedom movement of the country on the deaths of Mrs. Kamala Nehru, Dr. Ansari, Messrs. T. A. K. Serwani and Abbas Tayabji.

(4) This Conference while appreciating the services of Comrade M. N. Roy and others who are now undergoing imprisonment in different jails demands their immediate release.

Further this Conference request the nationalist members in the Legislative Assembly to move for their immediate release.

#### Presidential Address—2nd. Day—4th. October 1936

Dealing with the new Constitution, Mr. Meherally, in the course of his presidential address, said : History did not show any parallel political measure like this constitution which was so repugnant to all ideas of democracy and so universally condemned. "But it is scarcely necessary for me," he continued, "to demonstrate its reactionary character or to enter a plea for its immediate wrecking. The Congress has already decided to wreck the so-called Reforms Act in its entirety and the Government is equally determined to foist it upon the country. The tug-of-war is likely to be very stiff. Not only the people of this country will watch its course with concern but the oppressed people all over the world will watch its minutest details so as to draw lessons from it as suited to their own need.

"The new election under the Government of India Act will soon be upon us. The election manifesto of the Indian National Congress is already out. That the Congress candidates will be returned in large numbers all over the country is to be expected and that the Congress Party will have a majority in several of the provinces is more than likely. But some friends are urging the acceptance of Ministerial office in the event of a Congress majority. To my mind this course is fraught with grave dangers to our national struggle. It will spell disaster to our struggle for complete independence. Suppose that the leader of the Congress Party in Bengal becomes the Chief Minister, what will he be able to do for the impoverished peasants of Bengal ? Will he be able to abolish the Permanent Settlement ? Will your Chief Minister be able to relieve your peasants of the crushing burden of debt which the Banking Enquiry Committee estimated at one hundred crores and which others would put at twice that figure ? What will your Chief Minister do to meet the other demands of the peasantry ? The whole thing is so obvious. What will he be able to do for Labour, for your jute worker who is probably the worst sufferer in this province ? Will your Chief Minister be able to nationalise the jute industry ? What will the Chief Minister be able to do for the middle-class unemployment which probably is the acutest in Bengal ? What relief will the Chief Minister be able to give to the unemployed ? Unemployed is an invariable concomitant of the capitalistic system. So long as capitalism lives, unemployment also lives. In the circumstances the Chief Minister and his associates will be able to achieve nothing. Office acceptance to me appears to be a very clever trap. It will be our duty to create such a volume of public opinion that those persons in the Congress and outside who are glibly talking of office acceptance on the specious plea of wrecking the Constitution, even they will feel the pressure of public opinion and that at Faizpur Congress or

on any subsequent occasion when decisions are taken, might be able to carry the country with us.

Proceeding, the speaker pointed out that next year would be a momentous year in Indian politics. The new constitution would be facing them. The question of acceptance or otherwise would be before them. The tremendous agrarian crisis was likely to engage their attention and there was above all, the new orientation of Labour movement. Labour was very likely to come near the Congress once again and the situation required to be handled very sympathetically. It was most necessary that at such a time they should have at the helm of their affairs a personality who commanded the attention and loyalty of every section of Congressmen. It was necessary that at such a critical time Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be re-elected President of the Congress. During the nine months he had been able to bring about a new spirit of hope, a new spirit of resistance in the whole country. He has toured almost the whole of India and his tours have galvanised the whole country. It was most necessary that they should give him another year of office, for nine months between Lucknow and Faizpur could not be enough to carry out his ideas and schemes. The speaker would therefore ask for the re-election of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In this connection he would like to sound a note of warning. Already a move was on foot that the office of the President of the Congress should be for three years. The speaker was opposed to such a move. They should not stick to the old convention of having a new President every year. But they should interpret the situation in such a manner and the constitution in this respect should be so flexible that there should be provision for re-election of the President.

Referring to the communal problem, the speaker said that it was most unfortunate that Bengal should be so ridden with the communal bogey. The speaker did not for a moment want to cast doubt on the sincerity of indignation of a large section of Bengal Hindus who felt that a great wrong had been done to them by the Communal Award. To the speaker the Award was the most reactionary part of the anti-national Government of India Act. The very existence of separate electorate was enough reason for them to condemn the Award outright. It was sad to reflect that there should be people in this country in both the communities specially among the Mahomedans who should come forward to champion the Communal Award. But when everything is said the speaker could not help remarking that the widespread agitation against the Communal Award in this province, inasmuch as it concentrated on the number of seats given to the other community, was entirely misplaced. It did not matter to them how many seats were given to Hindus and how many to Mahomedans in a legislature when that legislature had not the power to give the most ordinary relief to the masses. It is most necessary therefore that they should see things in their entire clarity. He thought that the existence of the communal problem was due to the fact that they had not been able hitherto to draw all sections of the masses into the vortex of national movement and the remedy lay, according to him, in approaching the masses with a bold, clear-cut economic programme which reflected their day to day needs and requirements. He therefore emphasised that the Socialist solution was the only solution of the communal problem.

Speaking on the relationship between the national struggle and the Socialist movement, the speaker said: "The Congress Socialist Party has built up a powerful tendency in Indian politics, a tendency that is likely to have far-reaching results. During its brief existence the Party has been able to build up a reputation and have a following only next to that of the parent body, the Indian National Congress to which we all belong. For one thing it has put Socialism on the map of India. We Socialists have widened and enriched the very ideology of nationalism."

"The question is sometimes asked 'can you convert the Congress to Socialism?' The speaker thought that it showed a complete misunderstanding of the very purpose of the Congress Socialist Party. The task of the Socialist, he said, was not to make the Congress a big Socialist Party but to make it an organisation which should fight for complete national independence and to make it a genuinely anti-Imperialist organisation. They did not want to raise the issue of Socialism in the Congress at the present time nor did they want to divide the Congress at the present into Socialist and anti-Socialist camps. In the meantime they should preach the gospel of Socialism and look forward to the time when their ideals would be accepted by the country."

Referring to the present international situation the speaker believed that a world war was imminent and thought that the Far East would be the centre of this gigantic Imperialist conflagration. He urged that they should make a deep study of the

Far Eastern question and suggested the establishment of a chair for the study of Far Eastern affairs at all the Indian Universities. He would like to urge the Calcutta University which was several shades advanced than other Indian Universities in research work to take up the matter in right earnest.

The speaker next dealt with the question of detenus and ended by sending hearty fraternal greetings to S. J. Subhas Chandra Bose.

### Resolutions

The Conference adopted a resolution condemning the measures taken by Government to suppress civil liberties and raised its emphatic protest against the promulgation of the Public Security Act in predominantly labour areas like Calcutta, 24 Parganas, Howrah, as it was calculated to suppress workers' basic right of Assembly, organisation and expression and to thereby prevent them from active participation in the electoral campaign at a time when the labour had been enfranchised for the first time.

The conference demanded the unconditional release of all politics and working class prisoners including all those who had been convicted in connection with labour and peasant movement.

The conference condemned the present method of sending political prisoners to Andamans, village and home internment as well as restrictions of movement of citizens such as Sun-rise and Sun-set laws card system, and demanded the unconditional release of all detenus or their public trial in any competent Court of Law.

The conference demanded the immediate repeal of all acts calculated to suppress civil liberties such as B. C. L. A., Regulation III of 1918, Public Security Act, Trade Disputes Act and radical revision of the Indian Trade Unions Act, Wage Payment Act, Press Act and their like.

### Resolutions—3rd. Day—5th. October 1936

The Conference adopted among others the following resolutions to-day :—

"This Conference expresses its considered opinion that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people to frame their own constitution and that the new constitution as embodied in the Government of India Act is thoroughly reactionary and retrograde and seeks to intensify the exploitation of the masses and strengthen the fetters of imperialism by granting concessions to the upper classes at the cost of the overwhelming majority of the population and using them to thwart the working of the popular will.

The only cause open for the Congress is to adopt such measures as will make the working of the constitution impossible.

The conference declares that the only constitution that will be acceptable to the Indian people will be one drawn up by a national Constituent Assembly elected on universal adult suffrage and composed of the representatives of the exploited and oppressed masses of people, provided that those who have opposed and betrayed the struggle for independence shall have no place."

"This Conference is of opinion that the acceptance of Ministerial offices by Congressmen will spell disaster for the national movement and will give a serious set-back to our struggle for freedom.

It therefore decides on launching a strong campaign against the acceptance of Ministerial offices by Congressmen and others in this campaign its whole-hearted support to the anti-ministry campaign by Congressmen. It also invites the support of the A. I. T. U. C. and the organising committee of the A. I. K. C. in this important work.

The Conference is therefore of opinion that the question of office-acceptance should be definitely settled at the Faizpur session of the Indian National Congress and appeals to the Congress voters to elect only such delegates as are pledged to oppose the acceptance of ministerial offices.

"This Conference considers the election manifesto issued by the A. I. C. C., as a great improvement on the previous position of the Congress and offers its general support to the Indian National Congress in its electoral campaign.

This Conference hopes that in the selection of candidates proper care will be taken not to set up those whose past record is doubtful and that candidates with radical sympathies will be preferred. In this connection it expresses its strong disapproval of the attempts of certain members of the G. P. B., to make unholy

alliances with reactionary individuals with a view to obtain illusive paper majorities in the election and declares that such a course will be detrimental to our cause and bring about a revulsion of feeling against the Congress.

This Conference urges upon the Congress to clarify the following anti-imperialist issues in the election manifesto :—

- (1) to define complete national independence as the immediate objective of the Congress, thereby meaning "severance of connection with the British Empire ;
- (2) to declare emphatically against acceptance of Ministry ;
- (3) to call upon the B. P. C. C. executive to clarify its attitude towards the Communal Award in accordance with the resolution passed in the Conference ;
- (4) to make the positive slogan "Constituent Assembly" of the oppressed and exploited masses a live issue against the slave constitution and explain its significance to the electorate.

"This conference strongly disapproves of the recent decision of the B. P. C. C. executive regarding agitation against Communal Award. That decision not only drags the Congress into communal squabbles which cannot result in any good to the nation as a whole but diverts the attention of the people of Bengal from the main issues of repression, unemployment and grave agrarian distress and from the main task of presenting a united front to the slave constitution. In the opinion of the conference this side-tracking of political consciousness does irreparable harm to the struggle against imperialism.

The conference at the same time regards the Communal Award as a negation of the basic principles of democracy and as striking at the very roots of national unity.

It is therefore uncompromisingly opposed to it and believes that it must be put an end to. But it strongly feels that the only way to end the Communal Award is by strengthening the anti-imperialist movement which must necessarily lead to destruction of the New Constitution and by diverting the attention of the people from the false issue of communal interests to the real issue of the unity of the interests of the exploited masses of the country. It is in the development of this consciousness that lies the solution of the whole communal problem.

This conference therefore appeals to Congressmen in Bengal to oppose the decision of the B. P. C. C. executive and to mobilise public opinion against it."

"This conference notes with regret that all the anti-imperialist forces in the country are not yet organised on a common front against imperialism and regards the creation of such joint people's front as the supreme task before the Congress Socialist Party.

This conference believes that to-day the Indian National Congress provides the widest possible basis for the creation of such a people's front. Therefore it regards any attempt at formation of this front outside the Congress as ill-advised.

This conference is further of opinion that in order to create such a front it is necessary on the one hand to consolidate the anti-imperialist elements within the Congress, and on the other, to bring about a united front with all such elements outside the Congress and ultimately to unite them both.

For this purpose this conference believes that the Party must ceaselessly endeavour to radicalize the Congress rank and file and to link them up with mass movements outside, particularly of peasants, workers and youths. Alongside with this the Party must also endeavour to develop joint and united front action, in the shape of meetings, demonstrations, conferences, mass actions, etc., on the widest possible anti-imperialist basis, between itself and all anti-imperialist forces outside the Congress. Further, it must also undertake to organise and intensify the struggle of the masses, carried on through their independent class organisations, and to co-ordinate the latter with the movement for National independence as represented by the Congress by pressing their demands and programmes on it and by securing its participation in their activities and farther by working for collective affiliation of these organisations with the Congress.

In order to give effect to the above policy this conference recommends formation of contact committees between the C. S. P. and anti-imperialist organisations outside the Congress.

"Considering the momentous problems that are likely to face the country during the coming year, this conference is of opinion that it is necessary to have at the helm of Congress affairs a president who commands the confidence of all sections of Congressmen particularly of the left. Recognising the very valuable work done by Pt. J. L. Nehru during his presidency and so as to enable him to carry it further,

this conference is of opinion that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be elected as the president of the Congress.

The Conference also adopted a resolution recommending to the executive of the All-India Congress Socialist Party to fix an All-India Dotenue Day sometime in November.

## • The Tamil Nadu Socialist Conference

1st. Session—Salem—28th. November 1936

### Welcome Address

The first session of the Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Socialist Conference was held at Salem on the 28th. November 1936 under the auspices of the local Congress Socialists' Association, in the Mangala Vilas Electrical Theatre before a large gathering. Dr. Dinker Mehta, one of the Secretaries of the All-India Congress Socialists' Party, presiding. The role the Congress Socialists are expected to take in the aim of the Congress to obtain Swaraj was defined in the address at the Conference.

Mr. *Battilvala* of Bombay opened the Conference. Mr. *P. B. Bavani Singh*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates.

In welcoming the delegates, Mr. *Bavani Singh* said that the movement for the independence of India had gained ground and a policy of ruthless repression of Socialists had begun. In spite of all this, the masses were eager to better themselves by getting independence for the motherland. The condition of the masses, the workers and the peasants was daily growing worse and their existence was getting more and more miserable. They were all willing to come under the banner of Socialism and to have their status improved. At the same time, the world was being torn by Fascism.

As against all these dismal features, the speaker continued, they saw a gigantic reconstruction proceeding apace in the Soviet, where the liberated peasantry and workers were building up a new society, free from exploitation, free from selfish designs, and free to work out their own destinies. All these had their lessons for India and its workers.

### Presidential Address

Mr. *Dinker Mehta* then delivered this presidential address.

In the course of his speech, he said that the formation of the Provincial Socialist Party in the Tamil Nadu was but part of the response to the crisis through which the world was moving to-day. The Indian National Congress was to meet next month at Faizpur where vital matters will be discussed. The constitution which was being forced down the unwilling throats of India had to be wrecked, if the struggle for freedom had to be continued.

The real spirit of the League of Nations was dead and gone. Japan first threw to the winds the League's authority by her action in China and other nations like Italy and Germany followed suit with impunity.

After dealing with the situation in Spain, Mr. *Mehta* said that the ensuing war would be one of reaction against progress. It was bound to be on an international scale threatening freedom and democracy. India was also facing a similar situation. The fight for freedom was long and arduous and had to be continued. From constitutional advance to Swaraj and from the latter to independence, thence again to transfer the power to the hands of the producing classes based upon socialism, and finally on to world state of Communist society, this was the order of development, which the Congress Socialists in common with the others of that belief in the other countries, had in view.

In the old days, the Liberals had brought the upper classes into the Congress. Gandhiji had brought in the middle classes. To-day, the Socialists were out to bring in the proletariat into the arena as they were the real people who needed protection from starvation and death.



In spite of all opposition, socialism was making headway in India. The masses everywhere except in Russia were poor and miserable. Only socialism would solve the situation for them. It was true of all lands. India could not escape it and it behoved every one to be prepared for the inevitable. It was only a question of years for the Government to be transferred into the hands of the socialists.

Poverty in India had to be removed; the people must have food, clothing and shelter; and it was possible only with the advent of a socialist Government. The President then detailed the grievances of the workers and the peasants at the hands of the capitalists and the zamindars and said that the socialists must undertake propaganda among the masses and organise socialist groups everywhere. Only a revolutionary socialist group could lead the fight successfully against British Imperialism and therefore the Congress has to be changed into a real anti-Imperialistic organisation with a stirring programme which would arouse and draw into it the toiling masses. Congress Socialist parties had been organised in other provinces and Madras was doing it now. Their duty was to build mass organisations of the peasants and the workers on the Marxist model and these ought to be independent of the Congress itself. Then alone could the struggle for freedom be waged successfully. The socialist had to convert the rank and file of the Congress to this viewpoint and this work required patience and energy. All socialists had a common ground. In Europe, it was the destruction of Fascism. In India it was the ending of the foreign Imperialism. A united front alone could achieve this object. This definite political line should never be allowed to be blurred. There were various political groups in India even more radical than the Congress. The socialists could offer with them a united front within and without the Congress, against foreign exploitation.

The Congress was to-day the biggest political organisation in the country and required careful handling. Mr. Nehru has made socialism popular in the Congress and the country. The socialists should not rest content with it. Continuous fight had to be maintained with the Parliamentary 'rightists'. There was a united front between the socialists and the 'rightists' as regards the wroking of the constitution. The socialists however should not allow the 'rightists' to degenerate or dilute that attitude.

The speaker criticised the election campaign of the right wing of the Congress which he characterised as objectionable as they used Gandhiji's name and sang praises of the Congress, without popularising the demands of the masses, or carrying on a ceaseless anti-Imperialistic propaganda.

Mr. Mehta then took stock of the situation in the country and said that the new constitution in India was a big step in the consolidation of the British Empire. There were still now no political parties in India and the reforms would see to their birth. The reforms were bare and only served to perpetuate slavery. The Princes would form a new party of the conservative element and everything would tend to keep the country in subjection for ever. The older parties had been exposed and the Government knew that they did not enjoy the country's confidence. They wanted therefore a new type of men posing to have the people's confidence and thus the office acceptance issue had been brought to the forefront. Office acceptance was nothing short of co-operating with foreign bureaucracy. The constitution must be ended. The socialists had therefore to concentrate all their struggle on the objective. Congressmen in the legislatures must be watched and must not be allowed to slide down to compromises or conciliations. To-day the Government was doing something in the direction of village improvement work. But half-hearted measures would serve no good.

He then spoke on the plans of the socialists and said he appealed to all working classes to form unions and to fall in on the Marxist principle of mass freedom. He exhorted all socialists to work to strengthen the party.

Concluding, he said, the road to Swaraj was the road to socialism and both the struggles were one and indivisible. He warned his colleagues against bewildering and frightening the people and every one was to be approached from his own level. A peasant proprietor was to be approached not through the slogan of collectivism of land ownership but with that of the reduction of taxes. The Congress had to be democratised; the organised workers had to be given collective representation; the programme of the Congress had to be based on the economic requirements of the masses; war was to be actively resisted; the work in the Councils had to be laid down; office might be rejected; and the socialist programme had to be preached far and wide. This was the party's work on the eve of the Kaiser Congress and

they had to fight against entrenched forces. He hoped that the socialists would not be found wanting in the strength to fight such forces.

**Resolutions—Second Day—29th. November 1936**

Mr. B. Srinivasa Rao proposed and Mr. Bavani Singh seconded the resolution by which it was decided to form a Tamil Nad Congress Socialist Party and to affiliate it to the All India Party. Mr. S. P. V. Sundararajulu Naidu supported it. After this resolution was passed, Mr. P. Jeevanandam moved that the socialist programme based upon the relief of the peasant and the labourer from the Zaminder and the capitalist be adopted and that an appeal be made to all to support that creed. The masses were invited to join the organisation and the resolution contained several details of the agricultural programme and of relief to the industrial workers, such as maximum hours of work, minimum wages and other necessary safe-guards. The motion was seconded by Mr. K. A. Chary and carried nem con.

On the motion of Mr. S. N. Narasimha Raju and seconded by Mr. Rajagopalan, it was resolved to protest against the repressive policy of the Government in respect of the socialists. From the chair, the resolution condemning the policy of the Government in regard to the N. W. Frontier was moved and carried.

The conference resolved that India shall not have anything to do with any further world war.

Eri Neelavathy then moved a resolution appealing to the Indian people not to participate in the proposed Delhi Darbar next year and suggesting hartals etc. Mr. Kishen seconded it and Mr. G. A. Venketachery supported the motion. The All-India Congress Committee was asked to accept this resolution in terms of the attitude of the Socialist Party.

After this motion had been carried, the resolution pledging sympathy and support to the railway workers of the B. N. Railway in their decision to strike work from the 1st proximo and appealing to all other railway workers to stand by their comrades was moved by Mr. Krishnan, seconded by Mr. Venketachary and was adopted.

The last resolution was sponsored by Mr. Jeevanandam who said that the Congress representation must be changed structurally. The Conference welcomed the attempt made last year to get representation on a functional basis for the peasants and the workers, and asked the All-India Congress Socialist Party to fight for this issue until success was obtained.

Mr. B. Srinivasa Rao seconded this motion which was passed. The session then terminated.

## The Bihar Socialist Conference

The Session of the Bihar Provincial Congress Socialist Conference was held at Patna on the 5th. December 1936 under the presidency of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Secretary of the Foreign Department of the A. I. O. C. In the course of his speech Dr. Lohia said :—

"Council-entry has been thought as a stop-gap measure to occupy our national life when no other aggressive movement is possible and, therefore, it is regarded as part of our tried and exhausted national life." "We can use Councils in a real nationalistic sense only if we treat them as platforms and barometers of our nationalist agitation."

He said that now forces are trying to change the technique of freedom struggle into daily resistance against imperialist attacks and the spirit into a permanent revolt as distinguished from the old division of Satyagraha and constructive activities and they form into workers and peasant movements. National freedom is synonymous with progress and progress entails fight against low wages and taxes, rent, and indebtedness of the peasantry.

Imperialism consolidates its hold not merely through the political machinery but economic machinery. And so fight for progressive demands means fight against imperialism. General strike on the 1st of April next and boycott of the King's visit are actions which a living nation undertakes instinctively. National activity should

consist in undermining the pillars of the new Government of India Act, namely the Safeguards, India States, Communal Electorates.

#### Resolutions

The following resolutions were passed :—

1. In the coming conflict and struggle of the country India needs such a brave and conscious leader as is capable of giving a clear, straight and true lead to the country by courageously braving all the obstacles on the way and furthering the anti-imperialist struggle waging in the country.

In the opinion of this Conference, the most suitable person is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who, if elected as the president of the Congress, shall fight imperialism with courage and determination and with the assistance of all the progressive forces of the country.

It should therefore be the duty of all Congress Committees of Bihar to elect him Congress President for the second time."

2. "By holding the Coronation of the King in this country, British Imperialism is intending to tighten its grips all the more, and therefore this conference is of opinion that the whole country, especially the Congress should completely boycott the coronation celebrations.

3. "In order to hold the country all the more firmly in the shackles of slavery and to suppress the surging tide of freedom, British Imperialism has made a new constitution which has been forced upon us despite the unanimous opposition of the country. This black constitution is going to be inaugurated on April 1, 1937 when the new legislatures shall meet for the first time.

"This conference is of opinion that a general strike should be observed on April 1 throughout the country for expressing resentment and condemnation of the same, and it further appeals to the Faizpur session of the Congress to adopt this programme."

4. "This conference expresses its deep pleasure at the release of comrade M. N. Roy and welcomes him in the political field of the country".

## The All India Socialist Conference

### Third Session—Faizpur—23rd. to 24th. December 1936

#### Presidential Address

The third annual session of the All-India Congress Socialist Party Conference was held on the 23rd. December 1936 in the Subjects Committee pandal of the Congress at Faizpur.

Mr. Jajprakash Narain presiding, said that while they were able to do a good deal they had not done their best. Meeting, as they did, just before the annual session of the Congress, their eyes turned towards the Congress session and the question uppermost in their minds was what they should do in the Congress session.

"We are going through very critical times I wish its force is widely realized, I have made the colleagues who take a different, and rather complacent, view of things and brush aside all talk of critical times by saying that Socialists are inclined to be alarmist and it is better to concentrate on the immediate work in hand, namely, securing victory for the Congress at the polls next February! adding that there will be time enough to see what we could do after that. There are other colleagues who do not bother about the immediate task and who, in the midst of the tumult and the gathering storm, pursue with unflinching serenity their lofty dream of reviving the dead and dying industries of ancient lands. Frankly, this attitude—not of the man in the street, mind you, but of the active national worker—alarms me. We seem to believe that nothing extraordinary has happened in the last six or seven years in this rapidly changing world. We do not seem to be aware we are passing through a period of intense crisis which has brought war to our very doors and therefore demands a new technique, new slogans and a new form of struggle. We do not also realise more clearly that we have failed in our

previous battle with imperialism. We do not seem to show any anxiety for ensuring success in the next struggle. We seem to rely on time to lift the depression, which has supposedly fallen over the country, when we have another fight which will take us further on our road to Swaraj. Then we shall have another respite, then another fight and then yet another till we reach our goal.

"I lament the numerous people who think in this manner. Naturally they do not feel any responsibility consciously to evolve a higher and more effective form of struggle. A few months spent in jail at periodical intervals is about all that most of us in the Congress conceive our anti-imperialist struggle to be. If this sort of mentality persists Congress will find itself completely ineffective. We must learn to realise that the next struggle must be our last. Till we do it there will be little seriousness in our work. If we understand more clearly what is happening around us we will see that it is so.

"When I tell people within five years we shall be a free nation my friends laugh at me but I do believe our proportions and our work must be on the basis of even shorter calculation."

Proceeding, Mr. Jaiprakash said that the transformation that has taken place in the life of our peasantry in the last six or seven years as the result of the crisis of imperialism is without parallel. The poverty of the Indian peasant under the British rule has been a major premise in our politics. Referring to the Government of India's allocation of a crore of rupees for rural development and the Viceroy's presenting stud-bills, the speaker said, "We take it that it is all a counterblast to Mr. Gandhi's scheme of village industries. There may be some truth in it but the real conclusion to which it points is that the peasants' condition is becoming so desperate that even imperialism sits up and takes notice. Being, however, unable to do anything real in the matter it tries to woo the peasant by this show of false solicitude. The crisis suddenly reduced the peasant's income by half and even more than half. His debts went on piling. The mill of indirect taxation continues its grinding. The result is that seventy to eighty per cent of the Indian peasantry is bankrupt to-day and millions have become landless. Instead of rigorous and militant work among the peasantry we have been tinkering with sanitation and the lighting of villages. We think the British rule is responsible for the plight of the peasantry and it cannot be improved so long as that rule lasts. This of course is true, but then we conclude from this that we have first to rid ourselves of that rule and then improve the condition of the peasants. Therefore no attempt is made at present to relate the dire needs of the peasants with the struggle for independence, to make that struggle itself a struggle for reduced rents, revenue, freedom from debt, a more just distribution of the burden of taxation, a juster system of tenancy and so on. I suggest that this way of thinking is typical of the middle class. Clearly, we have not yet learnt to think like the masses because we are not yet close enough to them.

"What is true of the peasantry is also true of the industrial workers. Therefore the Congress should identify itself with struggling masses. The entire masses should be roused to activity, and the national movement should be raised to unprecedented heights.

"Briefly, the Congress must take hold of developing the mass unrest and forge it into a mighty weapon against imperialism."

Concluding, Mr. Jaiprakash Narain pleaded for broadening the basis of the Congress so as to include the widest possible sections of the people.

He suggested that provision should be made for giving organised sections of the masses collective representation in the Congress. He added that fear was expressed that if such a scheme were adopted the Congress would become the cockpit of a clash of interests. It was, he declared, to bury one's head in sand. "If there is a clash of interest in the country it cannot be kept out. Such fear is not worthy of the Congress and goes contrary to its declared intentions of moving closer to the masses and identifying itself with them."

Mr. Jaiprakash had no doubt that, in the coming provincial elections, people would register their will to freedom by showing that the whole country is behind the Congress in its uncompromising opposition to the new constitutions and for its wholesale rejection of it. But winning the election was only a small part of their work. A slave constitution cannot be wrecked merely by an electoral victory. The only effective way of opposing the constitution was to mobilise the masses. Whatever was done in and through the legislatures should be merely to help to organise that mass opposition.

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## Resolutions—Second Day—24th. December 1936

The Conference at its resumed session to-day passed five resolutions (two moved from the chair) condemning the action of the Faizpore police in searching and detaining some delegates from Bengal and calling upon the nation to observe a general strike on April 1 as demonstration against the new Constitution. The third resolution which was moved by Sm. *Satyavati Devi* referred to the King's Coronation.

Another resolution demands the release of all political prisoners and the immediate repeal of laws calculated to suppress civil liberties.

## BOYCOTT OF KING'S CORONATION

Sm. *Satyavati Devi*, moving the resolution on the boycott of the King's Coronation, observed that the Congress which was the most representative body of the country should declare boycott of the coronation. The object underlying holding of the coronation in India was to demonstrate the country's loyalty to the Crown. The Congress as the guardian of the people should not lose its prestige by allowing Congressmen to participate in the coronation celebrations. After Mr. R. K. *Khadivar* had supported, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

## DANGER OF WAR

Next Mr. *Rajani Mukherjee* proposed a comprehensive resolution on the danger of war welcoming the Lucknow Congress against the participation of India in any imperialist war and appealing to the Congress to prepare the people for the crisis and, in particular, to issue a call to refuse to volunteer or serve in any war, make financial contributions or to subscribe to war loans. It further opined that such imperialist war should be utilised by India for securing her freedom. The mover in a forceful speech offered elaborate arguments in support of his resolution which was seconded by Mr. S. M. *Joshi* of Poona and then adopted unanimously.

## RAILWAY STRIKE

The resolution which called upon all Railway workers to resort to a general strike and thus demonstrate their solidarity with the strikers on the Bengal Nagpur Railway was moved by Mr. *Shivanath Banerjee*, President of the All India Trade Union Congress. After it was duly supported, the resolution was carried without opposition.

## RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

Thereafter Mr. *Mohantal Kulkarni* proposed a lengthy resolution condemning Government repression in various Provinces demanding unconditional release of all political prisoners and immediate repeal of all laws calculated to suppress civil liberties.

Mr. *Abdul Gaffar* (Punjab Socialist) having supported, the resolution was adopted.

## THE NEW CONSTITUTION

Next Dr. *Rammanohar Lohia*, Foreign Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, moved with a vigorous speech a lengthy resolution reaffirming unequivocal condemnation of the new constitution, welcoming the robust tone of the Congress election manifesto and deploring the action of the Congress Parliamentary Board in refusing the candidature of Socialists in several provinces and opining that it violated the spirit of the Congress election manifesto. The resolution further called upon members of the Socialist Party to utilise the opportunity of the election propaganda to further their cause.

*Acharya Narendra Dev*, in according support to the resolution, counselled the Socialists to use the council platform to promote their struggle for independence. As this platform had been misused by reactionaries the Congress had decided to capture it with a view to prevent any harm being caused to the country through this channel. He stressed that the Congress victory in the elections would signal the country's victory in the fight for freedom.

After the resolution was adopted the conference terminated amidst loud cheers.

# The Congress and Socialism

## Economic Issues and Political Struggle

The following pen-picture on Congress and Socialism was published by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in September 1937 :—

Socialism may be good or bad, it may be a dream of the distant future, or a problem of the present; whatever it is or might be, it seems to occupy a large corner of the mind of India to-day. The word is bandied about from right to left, and behind it lurks, we are solemnly told, the grim shadow of communism. True, the notion of many of its critics as to what is socialism is of the haziest. And even professional economists, after the manner of Government propagandists, try to confuse the issue by dragging in God and religion and marriage and the degradation of women. We must not complain, although it is a tiring business to explain the alphabet to people who tell us that they can read. The curious part of it is that most of this talk and shouting about socialism comes from those who seem to dislike it and who do not want mention made of the word or the idea.

Socialism, as every school boy ought to know, is an economic theory which endeavours to understand and solve the problems that afflict the world to-day. It is also a way of looking at history and of trying to find from its wayward course the laws, if any, that govern human society. Vast numbers of people all over the world believe in it and seek to realise it. A great area from the Pacific to the Baltic is already under its sway; other great countries, like France and Spain, hover on the brink of it, and there is hardly a country in the world where it has not got a numerous and faithful following. Neither the intelligence behind it, nor the numbers that support, necessarily establish its truth. But they do demand a respectful consideration of it by us in India. They put us on enquiry for our own problems, political and economic and loudly demand solution. After considering it we may reject it utterly, or we may learn something from it at least even though we do not accept it wholly. To ignore this vital impulse which moves millions and captures both the minds and hearts of worthwhile people, can never be the path of wisdom.

But for us, it is rightly said, the political issue dominates the scene, and without independence all talk of socialism or any other radical change in our economic system is moonshine. Even a discussion about socialism introduces an element of confusion and divides our rank. We must concentrate on political independence and that alone. This argument is deserving of consideration, for we may not do anything which weakens us by breaking our joint front against imperialism. To some extent the premises are accepted by the most ardent socialist, for he admits that political freedom is the first and the essential objective for us to-day. Everything else must necessarily follow it, and without it there can be no other radical change.

Thus much is common ground. Nationalism is admitted to be our primary urge and concern. And yet the way of looking even at this common objective is not the same.

### STRENGTH OF THE CONGRESS

Nobody wants to create division in our ranks and all of us talk continually of joint fronts against our powerful adversary. Yet we can hardly ignore conflicts of interests, and even as we advance politically (quite apart from socialism or the economic issue) these conflicts become more apparent. When the Congress came into the hands of the "Extremists", the "Moderates" dropped out. This was not because of any economic issue but simply because politically we were becoming more advanced and the moderate elements consciously or sub-consciously felt that too great a political advance might endanger their interests. They dropped out. Yet curiously this split did not weaken the Congress, much as we might have regretted the parting from some old colleagues. The Congress drew in its fold large numbers of others and became a more powerful and representative organisation. Later came operation and again some Congressmen could not keep pace with the great majority. They dropped out (again on the political issue, though behind it there were other issues) and again Congress was not weakened. Vast number of additional people joined it and for the first time in its long history it became a power in our rural

areas. It came to represent India as it had never done before and to move millions by its mandates and advice. Thus, inherent conflicts between small groups at the top and the vast majority of our countrymen became ever more apparent as we advanced politically. We did not create them. We went regardless of them and thereby increased in power and effectiveness.

#### ECONOMIC ISSUES

Gradually, other issues began to colour our political horizon. Gandhiji spoke about the peasantry; he led strong movements in Champaran and Kaira. This was not a political issue though inevitably it had political repercussions. Why did he introduce this complication in the pure nationalism of our political movement? Why did he go about speaking of the terrible poverty of our people? This was new talk, a new orientation, likely to change the centre of gravity of our movement. He knew this well and deliberately he worked for the economic orientation of our political problem. Was it not largely because of this, as well as because of his great personality, that the millions rolled in under the banner of the Congress? All of us began to talk of the under-dog, and the sorely tried and crushed under-dog turned to us with relief and hope.

Gandhiji persisted in his stress on the poverty of India's millions. We knew this of course, theoretically—who could forget it—for we had the evidence of our own eyes, and the teaching of the giants of old—Dadabhai Naoroji, Digby, Banerjee and Romesh Chandra. And yet, it was a matter of books and statistics for us of the middle class. Gandhiji made it a live issue and we saw for the first time with horror-struck eyes what India was—a mass of hungry, starving, miserable people. To alleviate this hunger and unemployment, he urged the revival of spinning and weaving. Many people who considered themselves very wise laughed at this, but the charka, though it may not have gone far in solving the problem of poverty, brought relief to many. Even more so, it gave a new spirit of self-reliance and co-operation to those who lacked this most. It played a brave part in our political movement. Here again, we see an extraneous non-political issue influencing for our good, our national movement.

In later years, Gandhiji also stressed the problem of the Depressed Classes. In doing so, he inevitably provoked some groups of Sanatanists. There was conflict between those representatives of old customs and vested interests and the progressive forces. For fear of this conflict, Gandhiji did not hesitate to launch his great campaign against Untouchability. It was not directly a political issue. Yet, it was raised and rightly raised.

So, in the Congress and outside it, we see these conflicts of interests ever coming to the front. Whether it is a measure of social reform like the Sarda Act or Dr. Bhagwan Das's new Bill, or a political measure, affecting various interests, or a labour or peasant matter, this conflict of interest always comes up. Let us avoid conflict by all means, but how can we ignore it when it is there? And what are we to do about it? After sixteen years of stressing that we stand for the masses, there can be only one answer to this question when this conflict affects them. That answer Gandhiji gave in one of his speeches at the Round Table Conference in London in 1931. "Above all" he said "the Congress represents in its essence, the dumb-semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its 700,000 villages, no matter whether they come from British India or what is called Indian India. Every interest, which, in the opinion of the Congress, is worthy of protection has to subserve the interests of these dumb millions; and so you find now and again apparently a clash between several interests, and if there is a genuine real clash, I have no hesitation in saying, on behalf of the Congress, that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interest of these dumb-millions."

Our ever-increasing contacts with the peasantry made us think more and more in terms of their grievances and their welfare. There were agrarian movements in Bardoli, in the United Provinces and elsewhere. Local Congress Committees had often, almost against their will, to face the problem of the conflict of interests and to advise their peasant members as to their course of action. Provincial Committees in some provinces did likewise.

#### CONGRESS ON ECONOMIC & SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In the summer of 1929 the All-India Congress Committee itself at a meeting held in Bombay, boldly faced the issue and gave an ideological lead to the country. With all its nationalist background and stress in political freedom it declared—

phatically that the economic structure of society was one of the root causes of our poverty. Its resolution ran thus :

"In the opinion of this Committee, the great poverty and misery of the Indian people are due not only to the foreign exploitation of India but also to the economic structure of society, which the alien rulers support so that their exploitation may continue. In order therefore to remove this poverty and misery and to ameliorate the condition of the Indian masses, it is essential to make revolutionary changes in the present economic and social structure of society and to remove the gross inequalities."

Revolutionary changes ! I ventured to use these words not so long ago in Lucknow city and some people thought that they were new on a Congress platform. Few Socialists could improve on this general declaration of policy and outlook. Yet it would be absurd to say that the Congress had gone socialist. It was becoming more and more concerned with the poverty and misery of the Indian people and the realisation was growing that mere political changes were not enough, something more necessary. That something more was a change in the present economic and social structure, a revolutionary change. What this change was going to be, it did not state ; it was naturally, under the circumstances, vague and undecided about it.

Civil disobedience came, a political movement for a political objective. Again we saw a conflict of interests coming to the foreground ; the big vested interests fearing a far-reaching political change opposed the movement and supported the British Government. In some areas like the United Provinces, the conflict to interests was more marked because of the agrarian upheaval.

At Karachi the drive towards an economic reorientation became more marked. The Congress hesitated to go far but it could not hold back. Again it declared that 'in order to end the exploitation of the masses political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions.' It talked in terms of a living wage and it declared that the State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport. A socialist proposal, yet it was still far from socialism.

Thus has Congress been driven by force of events and that pressure of reality to face the economic issue. With all its passion for political freedom it could not isolate it from economic freedom. The two were inseparably bound up together. We have tried to keep them apart and to concentrate on political freedom, but economic problems would insist on barging in. We would shut our eyes to the conflicts of interests and yet, even on the political plane, these conflicts became ever more apparent. The Round Table Conference provided a revealing display of vested interests lining up behind British imperialism and opposing the forces that were working for Indian freedom.

Memories are short and many people forget this recent history of the Congress and of India. Socialism or a change of the economic structure of society are not new ideas unheard of previously in the Congress ; nor is the conflict of interests a novel conception. And yet it is perfectly true that the Congress is not socialistic to-day. But whether it is socialistic or not, it ceased many years ago to be an organisation thinking in political terms only and ignoring economic issues. As I write, one of its principal activities is to enquire into peasant grievances and draw up an agrarian programme. It must face this and other urgent economic problems. And in doing so, wherever conflicts of interests appear, as they are always appearing, all interests that clash with those of the masses will have to be sacrificed.

It is clear that we must concentrate on the political issue the independence of India. That is of fundamental and primary importance for us and any activity or ideology which blurs that issue is undesirable and not to be encouraged. On that I take it there is agreement amongst Congressmen of all ranks. Why then this talk of Socialism ?

As I understand it, it is not because any socialist imagines that socialism can have any place in India before political freedom has been established. It can only follow independence if India is ripe for it and the great majority of the people desire it. But the socialistic outlook helps in the political struggle. It clears the issues before us and makes us realise what the real political content (apart from the social content) of freedom must be. Independence itself has been variously interpreted, but for a Socialist it has only one meaning and that meaning excludes all association with imperialism. Therefore stress is laid on the anti-imperialist character of our political struggle and this gives us a yard measure to judge our various activities.



Further the Socialist outlook stresses what the Congress has been emphasising in varying degrees during these past fifteen years that we must stand for the masses and that our struggle should of the masses. Free-lom should mean the ending of the exploitation of the masses.

#### WHAT IS SWARAJ ?

This brings us to a consideration of the kind of Swaraj we are aiming. Dr. Bhagwan Das, with a most commendable persistence has been demanding for many years that Swaraj should be defined. I do not agree with him in some of his views, but I do agree with him that we cannot go on talking vaguely about Swaraj without indicating, however roughly, what kind of Swaraj we are aiming at. Are the present owners of vested interests to be the successors of the British in the governance of the country? Obviously that cannot be the Congress policy, for we have often declared that we are against the exploitation of the people. So inevitably we must aim at strengthening the masses so that they may effectively hold power when imperialism fades away from India.

That strengthening of the masses, and of the Congress organisation through them, is not necessary because of our objective, but because of the struggle itself. Only the masses can give real strength to that struggle, only they can carry on the political fight to the end.

Thus the socialist outlook helps us in our present struggle. It is not a question of carrying on now a useless academical argument about a distant and problematic future, but of shaping our policy now so as to make our political struggle more powerful and effective. This is not socialism. It is anti-Imperialism. It is the political aspect as seen from the socialistic view point.

Socialism of course looks further ahead. It aims at social reconstruction based on an elimination of the profit motive. That is not possible to-day and so the consideration of it may appear to some as academical and premature. But that view would be short-sighted indeed. For the consideration and clarification of the objective, even though we may not decide about it, affects our approach to it. In whose hands will power come when political freedom is achieved? For, social change will depend on this, and if we want social change we must see that those who desire such change have the power to bring it about. If this is not what we are aiming at, then it means that all our struggle is meant to make India safe for vested interests who desire no change.

#### THE SOCIALIST APPROACH

The socialist approach is the approach of Marxism. It is a way of looking at past and present history. The greatness of Marx none will deny to-day and yet few realise that his realistic interpretation of events, which has illumined the long and tortuous course of history, was not a sudden and brilliant innovation. It had deep roots in the past; it was known to the old Greeks and Romans as well as to European thinkers of the Renaissance and onwards. They conceived of history as a movement and a conflict of ideas and interests. Marx applied science to this old philosophy, developed it and made it the brilliant exposition that has so impressed the world. There may be lacunae in this exposition, over-emphasis here and there. We must not look upon it as a set of dogmas, but as a scientific way of looking at history and social changes. Much is made of the fact that Marx emphasised the economic side of life only. He did emphasise it because it is important and because there had been a tendency to ignore it. But he never ignored the other forces and urges which have moved human beings and shaped events.

Marx is a name that terrifies some people who know little about him. It may interest them to know what one, who, far from being an agitator, is a very respectable and honoured British Liberal, said not long ago. Lord Lothian in the course of the annual oration at the London School of Economics in June 1931 said :

"Is there not more truth in the Marxian diagnosis of the ills of modern society that we have been accustomed to think? I confess that the prophecies of Marx and Lenin are being realised with the most uncomfortable accuracy. When we look round at the Western world as it is, and the persistence of its troubles, is it not obvious that we must probe into the fundamental causes far more deeply than we have been in the habit of doing? And in so doing, I think that we may find that a good deal of the Marxian diagnosis is true."

This expression from one who might easily have been Viceroy of India is significant. In spite of all the prejudices of his class and the powerful pressure of his environment, his keen intelligence could not help being attracted by the Marxian diagnosis. Lord Lothian may have changed his opinions during the past five years. I cannot say how far what he said in 1931 represent his thoughts to-day.

#### EFFECTS AND CAUSES

But Marxism is not an issue before Congress to-day. The issue is whether we must fight the evil effects that we see around us or seek the causes that underlie them. Those concern themselves with the effects only seldom go far. "They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of these effects; they are retarding the downward-movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady."

This is the real problem—effects or causes. And if we seek for causes, as we must, the socialist analysis throws light on them. And thus though the Socialist State may be a dream of the distant future, and many of us may not live to see it, socialism is a beacon light of the present, illuminating the path which we have to tread.

So Socialists feel. But they must know that many others, their comrades in the present struggle, do not think so. They cannot assume, as some do, an attitude of superior knowledge and make themselves a sect apart. They have to justify themselves in other ways and thus seek to win over to their way of thinking those other comrades and the country at large. For, whether we agree or differ about socialism, we march together to the goal of independence.

# The Women's Conferences

## The All India Women's Conference

### Eleventh Session—Ahmedabad—23rd. December 1936

The following are extracts from the presidential address delivered by Mrs. *Margaret E. Cousins* at the Eleventh Session of the All-India Women's Conference held at Ahmedabad on the 23rd. December 1936. After reviewing the achievements of the All-India Women's Associations, Mrs. Cousins complained that women were not getting a fair deal as regards education.

"From the day I landed in Madras about this time twenty-one years ago to join Dr. Annie Besant I have felt spiritually at home; politically, as an Irish-woman, equally at home; physically, thank God, full of energy and good health; and coming straight from full participation in the valuable experiences of the struggle for votes for women in Britain and Ireland I soon realised that I had much to learn from my Indian sisters, and that anything I could do side by side with them in their struggles for freedom would not repay all I received from this great land, full of Beauty, Philosophy, Puro, Simplicity of Life; Ahimsa, and from the Hindu conception of *Ardhaanarishvara*, the dual Being, Half-Lord, Half-Lady, Divine Equality, Father-Mother of all creation; and from the Moslem acceptance of the spiritual equality of man and woman as expressed in the explicit language of the Koran. I have adopted India as my home for this life and it is a privilege for me to work in any and every way for its restoration to supreme dignity. Though I identify myself with their hopes and interests I do not feel worthy of their largeness of heart in overleaping the boundaries of nationalism and thus demonstrating that we are a solidarity of sisters in a world where the woes of women are similar everywhere.

Last year the All-India Women's Conference was entertained with royal honours in what I may call the Women's Kingdom of Travancore, and in that matriarchal State we saw in operation many of the reforms for which we are straining, such as inheritance, rights for women and the proportion of one literate girl to every two literate boys.

To-day we are back again in a Presidency of India (Bombay), not an Indian State. We are happily in the city for so many years blessed by the presence of the Sage of Sabarmati, Mahatma Gandhi, and we have to be worthy of the continued benediction of that holy patriot-reformer who brought our womanhood and its power of service and national sacrifice more into prominence in five years than all our reform movements had done in the previous hundred years. We are in a democratic environment—and you have a democratic President. This is the City of Cotton—and you have a Khaddar-clad President. Could we be nearer the agriculturist and industrial masses? Here we can study at first-hand problems of the peasantry and the mill-workers. Yearly our pilgrim bands of Conference delegates pass up and down and back and forth through this vast land like a shuttle weaving a new khaddar cloth for Mother India and we thank our hostesses of Ahmedabad for giving us this inspiring and instructive resting-place this year. Ahmedabad is also famous for its Harijan Ashrams and to-day nothing is more prominent in our thoughts than the Proclamation of Maharaja of Travancore granting temple-entry to Harijans of that State and we rejoice at such liberation and are proud that such an Act has taken place during the year when H. H.'s ideal mother has been the President of our Conference.

The All-India Women's Conference have created an All-Indian organisation of 30 Constituent areas, with 114 Sub-Constituency areas whose annual gatherings have been training grounds in public service and public speaking unequalled in the country, and unique in India as they are carried through by women only. We have created a most remarkable union of women of all classes, creeds, races, castes. Though originally a band of the intelligentsia we now are a solidarity of sisters such as never existed before in India ranging from Maharajas to Harijans, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, all feeling the common link of Conference connection,

activities and friendships. We have also created a public opinion on women's questions of a strength which did not exist previously. We have raised the prestige, dignity, influence, power, and capacity of our united womanhood, and gained a new and deep appreciation from the public for women's ability and for their rights of citizenship,—a wider vision of women's sphere and responsibilities, nationally as well as domestically.

As regards the support of indigenous industries the Indian women have only to compare the saris they are wearing to-day with those Videshi materials in which they were almost all arrayed in Poona in 1927 to be convinced of the sincerity and success of our promotion of Khaddar and Swadeshi as we followed the lead given to the country by Mahatma Gandhi, for we understood the necessity of economic self-help, and our responsibilities as the demanders and consumers of materials. In our annual exhibitions of indigenous industries at our many Conferences, and in our Entertainments, woman is in her element as lover, expresser and stimulator of Beauty in Arts and Crafts and in the Fine Arts.

We have taken a lead in pointing to a solution of the dread problem of the menacing growth of population in this country. Our Conference has ranged itself on the side of Eugenic scientific Birth-Control through the dissemination of knowledge by reorganised clinics of which those conducted by our Bombay Constituency since last year are examples worthy to be followed everywhere. I myself believe that dedicated self-control in the sex life is the highest ideal, but while people are growing to that perfection I believe also in using the help of Science to regulate the quality and quantity of the race, and especially to liberate physically and economically helpless mothers from too frequent and unwanted child-bearing amongst the general masses of humanity who have not the spiritual will to sublimate sex impulses. We must save by all health schemes a large proportion of the 200,000 Indian mothers who are yearly victims of maternity, and the millions of babies who are unnecessarily born only to die within their first year of life.

The mere recital of these achievements will hearten us for our future struggles, will increase our pride in our womanhood as such, and develop our sex loyalty, creating a new atmosphere and mentality which is as valuable as any concrete piece of legislation, new reform in education, or local item of constructive work.

Yet these gains are only as drops in the ocean of our country's needs. It is true that we have wide and deep cause for disappointment. The continued illiteracy of the country is heart-breaking to those who love India. In twenty years the percentage of literacy of Indian women has not risen from two or three per cent.

Our Indian administration is the most costly in the world, said a Royal Commission on the subject. While the pulse-strings are compulsorily withheld from Indian control in such manner that over 50 per cent of the central and provincial national revenues is consumed by army, law and order and administration there is no hope of liquidating illiteracy. History has proved that that can only be done by the full resources of a free nation.

I take this torch from Her Highness and carry it forward by demanding that the married woman in the home be legally entitled in her own right as a co-worker of the family and the country to a defined proportion of the income of her living husband, a due proportion of his assets when he dies, and if he has none then the State should give her a pension and a maintenance allowance for each child up to sixteen years of age while she rears them as Wards of State. This is not so-called endowment of motherhood. It is the expression of the economic value of the 'work' of the women in the homes. Unless this economic value is given to women who work in the homes all laws giving the widow property and inheritance rights are only a minor detail of the revaluation of women needed. They are only mending the edges of a fundamental problem. Without economic rights in the home women will continue to be the suppressed sex dependent on the generosity, patronage, sentimentality of the artificially-made-superior sex, and she cannot have self-respect or self-reliance but imbibes an inferiority complex, thinking also that her great hard-work of mothering and caring for the race is her curse instead of her worthy vocation. At present a premium is placed on women's work outside the home, its hours, physical conditions, wages are regulated. But the woman who minds the house and the children and the food has no 'locus standi' in the organised world of labour. For that woman who will ever be the majority type of womanhood, we will dream dreams and we will work for her legalised economic status till she stands liberated from inferiority and drudgery, valued as a worker within the home legally and financially as highly as the man or woman worker outside the home.

In 30 years the percentage of literacy of Indian women had not risen from two to three per cent. An enquiry by a committee of the Government of Madras this year reported that there was no money available for this desirable reform, and in the Central Provinces we saw the opposition of the Government to Mr. Tumb's gallant attempt to introduce a Bill to give compulsory primary education to girls only. Gokhale claimed that two-thirds of the national revenues should be spent on education. Under the present system of government, only 8 percent of these Indian revenues is allotted to education. While India spent only Rs. 8 crores for 350 million people on elementary education, Britain spent Rs. 85 crores for only 40 million, and the United States spends Rs. 347 crores for 130 million. "Even within the meagre amount available for education here, women were not getting a fair deal," she said. "Fourteen times more money is spent on boys' education than on girls'. It is appalling that only one out of every 100 girls gets elementary education, and only one out of every 1000 girls gets secondary education. At the rate we are moving, it will be a thousand years before India catches up in education with other nations! Yet Russia has shown the world that she could become literate in 30 years. We women can legitimately ask in the interest of our children, however, that two-thirds of the large amount that is being given to each Province as a birthday gift to the new Constitution shall be immediately allocated for spreading elementary education as "the safest and most valuable investment for the future."

Referring to the forthcoming election, Mrs. Cousins said, "In electoral matters, we find to our disappointment that our elected women will be the chosen of men and of vested interests of groupings of men rather than in any way representatives of women, because men voters are nearly seven times as many as women. It has been especially painful to us that the political parties have put forward only a couple of women for general seats despite the pleadings of the Congress President and though it was evident from the election of women for Municipalities and from the immense success of Mrs. Rukmani Lakshminipathy for the general constituency seat of Madras City for the Legislative Council that our sex is no barrier to election victories. The whole election subject is a muddle without principle or consistency. It can be set right only by the substitution of adult franchise, and we will continue to work for that with might and main, to obtain our freedom from the undesired and unnatural qualification of marriage, and the disparity of numbers, and the limitations of a monetary status instead of a human and rational status. As for the virus of communalism that has been forced on us, the only way to get rid of it is to vote for candidates who pledge themselves to remove communal electorates."

Mrs. Cousins then outlined the future programme of work and said: "I appeal to our members individually to increase their efforts in the work they are already doing so as to spread health, purity, beauty, recreation, enlightenment, knowledge, prosperity, freedom, happiness. It is not subtraction of schemes, but multiplication of workers we want and of numbers of the schools, hostels, creches, women's parks, classes in Hindi, clinics, rural training centres, demonstrations of communal unity, anti-drink campaigns and civil groups, Harijan services, vigilance committees, and dozens of other fine schemes which different localities are carrying on. We must also as an entire Conference get into touch with our sisters in the villages, fields, factories. We must know their lives at first hand if we want to speak in the name of the mass of Indian womanhood. These agriculturists and industrialists form 7,000 out of 10,000 of the population, and actual wage-earning women from 2,000 out of every 7,000. Let us live in a village as Gandhiji is living in Sheogan so that we may get to grips with it and help the people who are living each on an average at a rate of Rs. 2 per day. Only through the documentation of the heart will we get the courage and will to plan wisely and carry through politically a new social and economic order where the wealth that exists in this land and the necessities that are produced in it may be shared equitably and sanely, 'with knowledge free, and the head held high."

"In his reply to our Conference questionnaire to parties regarding the programme of candidates for the elections, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru said: 'I feel that many of the items in your programme are superficial in the sense that they do not enquire into the root causes of the evils which we want to get rid of.'

"This is a world complaint. Let us be humble. Let us study more. Let us drop prejudices and be ready and brave for changed valuations, for changed ways, for changed lives. Change must come, for neither India nor the world can go on as they now exist."

"In this study of fundamentals we women have to create new standards. All women's struggles for reforms when analysed are our expression of revolt against a double standard. There has been acquiescence everywhere in the idea that there shall be one standard for men, and another different standard for women. There is a double standard in morality, in wages, in education, in citizenship, in opportunities for work and service, in religion. Here lies the Centre of the women's movement. Having become aware of the injustices, cruelty and depreciation under which the mass of women suffer because of the double standard we are determined to establish ourselves as an order of humanity equal in spiritual degree to our brothers, and in every section of the social and economic framework to be valued by the economic worth of the work we do, not by sex. Last year, our President, the Maharani of Travancore, said truly, "The solution of women's problems depends on securing for them, in marriage and out of it, economic independence. There must be freedom to work outside the home, and economic partnership in the home'.

"The tide of national consciousness has risen high in the last ten years. The people state now everywhere that they want the government of the country wholly in their own control. We women in this Conference are part of the people. We cannot separate ourselves from them. We are in our own way a representative cross-section of the people. How can we remain dumb about national freedom, the very basis of all great reforms? The demand for Swaraj is not a party question. National self-government is a racial birthright above the divisions of party ways and means of securing or maintaining it. There is no regulation in our Constitution to prevent us from expressing ourselves on this paramount subject. Has not the political status of the whole country as much to do with the welfare of women and children as the political status of women within an admittedly unsatisfactory new constitution? Knowing our members and constituencies intimately as I do I make bold to say that there is not one of us who will not rejoice if we pass a resolution at the earliest possible moment declaring that we unite as a Conference with the country's demand for political freedom because it is our birthright, because it is a principle, and because it alone will give full effect to the social and economic freedom of women and secure our desired welfare of children. Our first mandate to our 56 women legislators must be 'Work first for political liberty, for liberation from subjection, both internal and external, and side by side with that supreme task work for all our already expressed ideal and reforms'."

## Memorandum to the League of Nations

### Status of Women in India

A memorandum on the status of women in India was submitted to the League of Nations by the All-India Women's Conference and the Women's Indian Association in September 1936.

They regret immensely to report that the Government of India have sent to the League of Nations a Memorandum on the Political and Civil Status of women in British India without so much as consulting Indian Women's Organisations.

In the Council of State six elective seats are for women to be filled by votes from members of all the Provincial Chambers. Women's franchise for other seats is on the same basis as that of men.

Nine elective seats for women in the Federal Assembly are to be filled by votes from all women members of all the Provincial Chambers. Women members of the Provincial Chambers will also have the right to vote for the members of the Federal Assembly.

Some Provinces have Upper as well as Lower Houses. Women have seats for them in all the Lower Houses other than the North West Frontier Provinces and they will be eligible to stand for election to all Chambers on equal terms with men.

Women have been given special franchise qualifications over and above the general qualifications applicable to both men and women, e.g. an educational qualification which varies with certain Provinces those who are wives and widows of those possessing or who would have possessed necessary property qualifications; those who are wives and widows of those who were in the previous financial year assessed to the necessary income tax; those who are wives, pensioned widows or pensioned mothers of an officer, non-commissioned officer or soldier of His Majesty's Regular Military Forces; and those who are wives and widows of a retired, pensioned or discharged officer or soldier of His Majesty's Regular Military Forces.

In both the Federal and Provincial Governments women are eligible to contest seats, other than those reserved for them. It may be mentioned that all seats have been reserved on a communal basis, in the case of women, against their united will.

Women are being increasingly appointed on Government Commissions and Committees concerned with education, social reform, health and labour. No woman has yet found a place on the Public Services Commission though the latter deals with the selection and appointment of both men and women to the service.

Government have nominated women on two occasions to go to Geneva and serve on Child Welfare and Labour Commissions. But in this connection we would like to mention that even though recognised Women's Associations have furnished them with a list of women from whom a choice could have been made, the Government of India completely ignored their views.

With the exception of certain Provinces, e. g., Punjab, Assam, Sind, women have the same right of franchise and election to Local Bodies as men.

Women have not so far been appointed Judges, but there are many non-stipendiary Honorary Magistrates. These, however, are not always given the same powers as men. Women are not eligible for serving as Jurors.

With regard to our political status we may mention that all foreign questions, all military expenditure and finance in general, all aerial and coastal and tariff questions are outside the control of the men and women in India.

There is a diversity of interpretation of Hindu Law with the result that there is no uniform system throughout the country. The two main sub-divisions are known as the 'Daybhag' which holds sway in Bengal, and the 'Mitakshara' which applies to the rest of India. The joint family forms the nucleus of Hindu Society, and property rights are based on it. The system has outlived its utility and a recent Act has accelerated its destruction but the position of the women even under this is far from satisfactory.

Under Hindu Law women have no absolute rights of property except in certain specific cases of Stridhan known as Saudaik. This means that if property is willed to her or gifted to her or is the result of her own earning before marriage, she has absolute rights of disposal, but if this accrues to her after marriage, even if it is her own earnings, she cannot dispose of it without her husband's consent.

Only amongst those who are governed by the Mayuk school in parts of Bombay a daughter has absolute rights of property left by her father. Apart from this, Hindu Law allows an unmarried daughter only bare maintenance and marriage expenses from the joint family property provided she lives in it. If the property is divided then one-fourth of the share of the sons is kept in trust for her marriage expenses. Under Daybhag Law the daughter inherits only if there are no sons or widows alive. A married daughter inherits under this Law if she has children and if no sons, grand-sons and unmarried daughters are alive. Under Mitakshara Law the position is worse as due to the system of survivorship, the property reverts to coparceners if there are no male issues.

As a wife a Hindu woman has subordinate co-ownership in her husband's property. Except in the case of Saudaik Stridhan a husband has certain rights in his wife's property but she can claim back all Stridhan if he refuses to maintain her or deserts her. A widow's rights are very precarious. Under all schools of Hindu Law, if she has sons, she has only the right of bare maintenance unless a property is divided, when she gets a share but only a limited right over it. Under the Daybhag School of Law if a widow has no sons she is given a life interest over all her husband's property. But she cannot sell or give away his property except under certain cases known as legal necessities. Again, due to the system of survivorship the widow like the daughter does not inherit under Mitakshara Law even if she has no sons. There is one grave injustice under Dayabhag law. A son's childless widow is not even entitled to bare maintenance and with no rights either in her husband's or her father's home her lot can be, and sometimes is, most pitiable and tragic.

If a woman marries again or loses of chastity can be legally proved against her, she loses whatever rights accrue to her except in regard to property—she may have inherited before her marriage or as a gift from her sons.

Under Islamic Law women have far more equitable rights in regard to property. Although a daughter is not given an equal share she is given a definite share over her father's property. A widow gets an absolute share over her husband's property. Both according to Shia and Hanafi Law, a woman possesses property and has absolute ownership over it. The daughter, widow, mother, sister and even aunt are all recognised as heirs along with men and have fixed and definite shares. A daughter

gets half of son's share, but if there is no son she gets half a share. A wife gets half a share. A wife gets one-eighth and one-fourth share if there is a child or a son's child. A mother gets one-sixth share if there is a child otherwise one-third share in her son's daughter and grand daughters have definite shares and are known as residuary sharers if the parents are alive.

A great anomaly arises in India, because many Muslim communities, specially in the Punjab, Kathiawar, and Gujarat, are ruled by customary law and so the women do not get the benefits of Islamic law regarding property.

The Indian Succession Act came into force in 1925. Under it women have equal rights of property with men and a daughter gets an equal share with the son. A widow is entitled to one-third share of the husband's property but receives a one-half share if he has left no children and the whole of his property goes to her if there are no kindred. This should be noted, as under the English law to-day a widow does not get more than one-half of her husband's estate even if there are no kindred, as under these circumstances, the other half reverts to the Crown. This Act at present applies only to those who come under the Special Marriage Act and to Indian Christians. Its application to the Hindu and Muslim communities would perhaps be the easiest way of obtaining legal equality for women. It must be noted that an anomaly arises in the case of the Brahmos who although they are married under the Special Marriage Act are guided according to the rulings of the codes by orthodox Hindu Law regarding succession and property and so do not derive the benefits of the Indian Succession Act.

As interpreted in India to-day divorce is banned both by Hindu Law and society as marriage is considered to be a sacrament. Even judicial separation is not allowed unless cruelty can be legally proved to amount to a personal danger to life. According to the recent rulings of the codes, marriages to lunatics are considered invalid. But under no other circumstance can an unhappy marriage be dissolved. Only in the case of aborigines and those who do not come under the Brahmanical law are rights of divorce allowed. In the old Hindu system, however, as expounded in the *Amriti* period (Narada and Vashistha) dissolution of marriage was allowed and did occur in cases of adultery, cruelty and desertion. The present system is far more unfair to women as according to the law a man is entitled to marry again in the life time of his first wife if she is childless and all she is entitled to is to live in the dwelling house and be given bare maintenance. Strictly speaking this custom has fallen into disuse and occurrences of this kind are extremely rare. Yet legally this highly inequitable practice is still allowed.

As the contractual basis of marriage is recognised in Islamic Law, divorce is allowed. But as the law obtains in India, it is only at the will of the husband that a woman can obtain her divorce. A man can obtain a divorce very easily at his mere will to do so, and has to give no valid reasons and even the woman's consent is not necessary. The law of dower mitigates the harshness of its provisions to a certain extent. A woman can sometimes purchase her divorce by giving up her property and this is called *Khula*. But in India even under these circumstances the husband's consent is necessary, although according to the strict method of "*Khula*" divorce, which does not obtain in India, the women have also certain rights of initiating divorce. The usual method is "*Mubarat*" when the man initiates the divorce and the woman receives back the full share of her property. Another great injustice is that a plurality of wives, up to four in number, is allowed in Islamic law. Unlike, as in the case of the Hindus among whom it is almost relic of the past, it still holds in Muslim society although with the advance of modern thought cases of this nature are becoming rare.

Under the Special Marriage Act divorce on modern lines is allowed, both at the initiation of the husband or the wife. Marriage rights are also on an equitable basis. This Act was amended in 1923 and made available for Hindus who contract marriage according to the provisions of that Act for which no ecclesiastical ceremony is necessary. Those married under this Act are guided by the Indian Divorce Act IV of 1869 for dissolution of marriage. Unfortunately, only a very small section of the community is guided by this Law.

Some of the progressive Indian States such as Baroda and Mysore have passed new marriage laws recently under which divorce is allowed on modern lines and bigamy punishable by law.

Women are not deterred from entering the public services though their number is comparatively small. The Medical and Educational services are the services so far patronised by women. There is no bar however, to their entering the civil service



as is made quite clear by the provision in the Government of India Act of 1935. With regard to the police service, though there is no legal bar, the authorities have not deemed it necessary to recruit women for the service. Some years back a representation was made to the authorities in Bombay by an influential body of women to recruit women police specially for vigilance work, but the request was not granted. In Delhi, however, during the political upheaval of 1930, women police were temporarily engaged to look after women prisoners. Recently the C. P. Government have appointed six women to do police work in the Excise Department. If the experiment is successful they hope to engage more women for the work.

While there is no bar to women entering any of these services, the income they received by way of salary is not always the same. The Indian Medical Service was originally a military service. Even the civil side of it serves as a reserve for the army service. No women doctors are, therefore, recruited in this service. Women, however, have a special medical service of their own. The grades of salary in both these services are, therefore, not the same. The Women's Medical Service is more or less on a par with the provincial medical service. In the subordinate medical services, women doctors are generally paid higher to start with than men owing to a greater demand for them.

In the Educational service, specially Bombay, women recruited for administrative work as Inspectresses of Schools etc., get a slightly higher start than men for the same work, but the maximum they reach is far below the maximum reached by men. There is a tendency in some parts to pay women teachers less than men. However, the payment generally follows the demand and supply theory. Where there are more women teachers than are needed, they are in danger of getting less.

There is no legal bar to women entering any profession. So far women have entered law, medicine and teaching. In the Census Report of 1931, Medicine, which includes for the purposes of the census, midwives, compounders, nurses, etc., shows for every thousand persons engaged in it 707 actual women workers as against 293 men. A few women have qualified themselves as Chartered Accountants. One woman has recently become an architect.

As there is more or less a fixed scale of fees charged by medical practitioners, women doctors do not receive anything less than men. Where the scale is not fixed women are at a disadvantage.

With regard to arts also there is no restriction against women. Women are in evidence among musicians, actors, dancers, artists and sculptors. The cinema has attracted many a woman and women artists are handsomely paid. Musicians as well as dancers can get a decent income through their art. The figures of 1931 census, however, show a decrease in their number. Women artists and women sculptors are still very few.

Business and commerce are also not a close preserve for men though few women are known to run their own business or undertake any commercial enterprise on a large scale. Women, however, are known to be Directors on many insurance companies and have worked successfully as organising agents for insurance companies. Women are also found in Banks. Recently a woman has become one of the directors in a Bank in Salem, South India. Mostly they are, however, in a dependent position.

Women are found engaged in large numbers in small trades and in some cases they exceed men in numbers. For instance, in the 'Dairy produce, eggs, and poultry trade', for every thousand persons engaged in that trade there are 514 women to 485 men. In trade in fuel there are 357 women to 443 men dealing in charcoal, cowdung and firewood.

India is mainly an agricultural country and, therefore, a very large number of women are found in agricultural occupation. Accordingly to the census figures of 1931, 71 per cent of actual workers in India are occupied in pasture and agriculture, and if we deduct the number of those who follow it only as a subsidiary to some other occupation, the percentage comes to 67. The proportion of women to men workers is nearly one to three. Women, however, are not the principal earners, but mainly provide labour in the fields. For every thousand persons working on the fields there are 457 women to 543 men workers. In that of labour in special cultivation, for instance 'tea' there are 456 women to 544 men. The reason is obvious. Female labour is cheaper than male labour. Then there are a number of women who work on their family farm—husband's or father's—for which they get nothing.

Women are found in large numbers in industries but mostly as dependent workers. The largest number of workers are found in the textile industry. The population of women to men workers is very large. For instance, in Ceramics—potters

and makers of earthen ware—for every thousand workers, there are 309 women to 691 men. In dress industries—washing and cleaning—there are 417 women to 583 men. In food industries, the ratio of women workers per thousand is 523 to 478 men. As makers of sugar, molasses and gur there are 527 women to 473 men. As grain perchers there are 626 women to 374 men and as rice pounders and huskers and flour grinders there are 516 women to 185 men for every thousand workers.

Maternity Benefit Acts have been passed in the provinces of Bombay, Madras and C. P. by which women in large industries can derive some benefit. In some of the textile mills of Ahmedabad, however, there is a move to dispense with the services of women in order to escape the payment of the maternity benefits, under the excuse of rationalising the industry. So that, instead of deriving benefit out of such wise measures, women are victimised for no fault of their own.

In conclusion, though women are not declared by law from entering into any public service, in practice women are not recruited for any service except the medical and the educational. Even in these services they are not recruited on the same terms of service as men. While all professions are open to women, the competition is so great that the few women who enter them do not find it easy to fight for their share except perhaps medical women who are in great demand.

In industries and agriculture where masses of women are found working they are definitely at a disadvantage as they are paid lower wages than men. In mines, for example, women are paid less than even unskilled men workers. The bulk of men and women are engaged in these two occupations. For every ten thousand persons occupied, seven thousand are occupied in agriculture and industry alone. Considering the fact that women workers form one third of men workers, large mass of women in India are engaged in these two pursuits where they are receiving unfair treatment. In that they are paid less than men. It is, therefore, here that something should be done in order to improve economically the lot of a large number of women in India.

While there is no bar to girls entering schools the fact that only 2 per cent of women in India are literates shows the deplorable dearth of girls' schools in the country. There is no bar to women entering Universities either—but generally speaking there is a dearth of women's colleges, and where facilities for coeducation are available, those are lessened by the fact that there are not an adequate number of Hostels for women students.

State expenditure on Female Education is wholly inadequate for the needs of the country and compares very unfavourably with that of boys.

In a Province like Madras, where there is no Parda system, to certain extent girls are being educated in institutions for boys but on the other hand, in Provinces where there is relatively very little co-education—the figures show to what a small extent money is spent on the education of girls. The total expenditure on Education is only 8 per cent of the National Revenues. There are few facilities for technical training for women.

The system of Education devised in the past with the best of intentions, and followed till now, has been found inadequate to meet the present day needs of the society and of the country, and this realisation is being given due consideration now both by the Government and private organisations, as well as men and women who are interested in Educational reform. The above memorandum applies to women in British India. But we are also submitting a short general note on women in Indian States.

There are States which are far more advanced in some respects than British India. Others compare very unfavourably. So that the status of women there differs according to the advancement of the State.

There is no political status for State subjects—whether men or women. There is no bar to women members being appointed on any commission or committee. In some States where there are legislative assemblies women can stand for election or may be nominated.

There are women municipal members in some States. In some States there are no municipalities, but where they exist, women members of legislatures. As for public institutions, there are some women members on the managing bodies of some of these institutions.

There is no legal bar to the appointment of women on the Judiciary, but convention prevents it.

In Mysore, Baroda and Travancore the legal status of Hindu women is much better than it is in British India. In other States the same Hindu or Mahomedan law applies as in British India.

Criminal Law applies equally to men and women, and there is no difference in punishment for crime.

By convention, the public services, except educational and medical, are not open to women. In one State, however, a woman was appointed as Minister of Health.

The same is the case with all professions except singing.

Wherever there are colleges and Universities, women are appointed as professors even in men's colleges. In schools and training classes women are admitted freely, if space and other arrangements permit. There is no provision for technical training for women in technical schools.

There are a good many women teachers in many States. There are women principals of women's colleges and Head Mistresses in charge of schools, in some States. At least in one State we know of a woman who occupies the post of a Deputy Director of Education.

In conclusion, the All-India Women's Conference wish to stress the point that they, in common with other individuals and organisations, are doing their level best to do away with all disabilities—legal, social, and political from which women suffer. In this connection they have to combat not only Indian orthodox organisations, and conservative-minded men and women but also a Government that has so far maintained an apathetic attitude towards their point of view. The Conference, however, is quite sure that with international help and their own growing inner strength, the women of India will, sooner rather than later, come into their own.

## The Agra Women's Conference

The fourth constituent conference of the All-India Women's conference, Agra constituency, was held at Benares in the Theosophical Society Hall, on the 14th. October 1936. Mrs. L. N. Mason of Lucknow presided.

The Conference adopted the following resolutions :—

1. This conference strongly protests against the existing discriminations in laws against the rights of women. It asserts that no merely reformatory measures are acceptable and demands that the existing laws should be radically altered.

2. This conference requests the Government not to give grants to communal institutions and to close communal hostels wherever they exist.

3. This conference reiterates the importance of tackling the problems of adult illiteracy and calls upon its members to organise classes and centres for the promotion of literacy and general education among adult women.

4. This conference feels the needs for the reorganisation of summer camps for women and calls upon the conference committee to make the necessary arrangements.

5. This conference calls upon its members to help in the carrying out of a constructive programme of village reconstruction paying special attention to the amelioration of the condition of women in the villages and calls upon its members to restrict all their purchases to, as far as available, Swadeshi goods and indigenous industrial products.

6. This conference strongly condemns the practice of untouchability and calls upon the public in general and women in particular to work wholeheartedly for the abolition of this evil and strongly supports the demand for the opening of temples, the common usage of wells and roads and equal admittance to schools and other public institutions for the so-called untouchables.

7. This conference reiterates the demand for the early passing of a Maternity Benefit Act for the whole of India.

Among those who participated in the deliberations at the conference, besides the president were Dr. Thungama, Mrs. Wagle, (Chairwoman, Reception Committee), Miss S. K. Nehru, Mrs. Padmabai Rao, Miss Leela Misra, Miss Indramohini Sinha, Miss Janaki, Mrs. Rama Rao, Mrs. Hajra Begam, Miss Sharga, Mrs. Purnima Senarji, Mrs. Jahori, Miss Telang, Miss Rajeshwari Gupta, Miss Spencer, Mrs. S. Dhar and Mrs. Philpot.

# The C. P. Women's Conference

The Central Provinces South Women's Conference held its tenth session at Saoner on the 31st. October and 1st. November 1936 under presidency of Miss Rubeca Ruben, education secretary, All-India Women's Conference. The presence of a number of women from villages in the neighbourhood at the conference was a noteworthy feature of this year's session.

Mrs. Godbole, in welcoming the delegates, said that the women's movement in India was described in some quarters as an extremist agitation, but she failed to understand the mentality of those who levelled such accusations without adducing convincing arguments to support their view. She asserted that it behoved menfolk to help them in combating illiteracy among women and securing privileges for them which they claimed as of right and not as favours.

## Presidential Address

Miss Rubeca Ruben in her address pleaded for a radical change in their mentality and wanted every woman delegate to think before she recorded her vote on the resolutions coming up at the conference. Referring to social legislation impending in the Legislative Assembly she said that no good results could accrue by mere legislation unless they were prepared to take up social reform with the courage and zeal of ardent and sincere workers determined to purge their society of all evil customs. She deplored the tendency noticeable in English novels and other foreign publications to depict the bad aspect of Indian life and said that they must counteract this propaganda by contributions and articles in the foreign press giving an accurate picture of the present conditions in India.

Miss Ruben advised them not to discard their homes and reminded them that to manage home well was also a part of the national work. As mothers it was their duty to take proper care of children, the future citizens of India, and unless they realised this vast responsibility there was no hope for the future.

She advised them, with reference to the new constitution, not to be influenced by any consideration other than ability and urged them to send such representatives to the legislature as they thought could voice their opinion in the Councils.

## Resolutions

The conference adopted several resolutions supporting Dr. G. V. Deshmukh's bill conceding the right of inheritance of property to women and Dr. Khare's bill abolishing the dowry system, condemning the recent attacks levelled by responsible leaders on women taking part in public movements and urging the Government to tackle the acute unemployment problem and to appoint committees in every district to conduct temperance work.

The conference urged the Government of India and provincial Governments to appoint capable women particularly in Education, Labour and Health Departments so as to ensure that women's interests were adequately safeguarded.

An all-India legislation to secure adequate maternity benefits was asked for in another resolution passed by the conference.

The conference also advised women to cast their votes in favour of candidates in the coming elections who will be pledged to support Dr. G. V. Deshmukh's bill in the Legislative Assembly seeking to concede the right of inheritance of property to women.

# " The Oudh Women's Conference

The Oudh Women's Conference was held at Lucknow on the 16th. November 1936 under the presidency of Lady Kailash Srivastava. In the course of her address, the President said :—

"The coming election is the most intriguing thing before us and I will take the first opportunity to emphasize that while making the best use of a bad job we, women, will agitate for our rights. We will fight for joint-electorate ; we will fight

for more representation ; we will fight for full responsible government and for equal status in the comity of nations. In short, the mandate of the All-India Women's Conference is binding on us. Let us make a clear out declaration that we, women, will not support any candidate or any party which does not accept the programme of social and political reconstruction, as envisaged by the premier women's organisation of this country.

Coming to concrete issues, you will find that the reservation of seats for women will give rise to new problems which will require fresh considerations and definite instructions for your representatives in the provincial Assembly. It is my humble suggestion that there should be a standing committee for Legislative purposes as we have in the A. I. W. C. The committee should be empowered to suggest questions, resolutions and Bills which the elected women members shall be morally bound to move in the Legislative Assembly. The committee should, further, help the members in getting information, statistics and data so that our representatives may be able to carry out their duties as members worthily. It is my little experience that without the cooperation and active support of women all over the province it is not possible to do anything substantial for the betterment of women. An organised effort is to be made and such a committee of Oudh women will greatly strengthen the hands of your representatives in the legislature.

'Closely connected with this question is the necessity of having team-spirit. Loyalty to women's interest should be insisted upon. We have six seats in U. P. Legislative Assembly and many women will come from general constituencies, and let it be an article of faith with us to vote jointly on any women's questions. The members shall have the fullest freedom to use their votes on any matter they chose to, unless it clashes with the expressed views and mandate of the A. I. W. C. I want you to give a clear lead in this direction. Up to now, women's representation was by nomination and as such there was little freedom to exercise the right of speech or vote, according to the dictates of conscience or according to the dictates of any organization. Moreover, as they were new to the job women in all provinces had to grope their way in the dark. But as we are now apprised of the situation, it is our duty to lay down rules and give directions to them so that our group may be a solid phalanx. It is true that party sense will grow slowly but we should make a beginning. Our efforts should be to have a watchful, intelligent and enlightened public outside and a compact party inside the legislature.

'Coming to our social questions, I have to bring to your notice the sympathy and neglect on the part of the Government to implement the wishes of your Legislatures. Without intense public agitation any legislation cannot be effective. Your representatives may be able to get a law passed, but it rests in the hands of the Government to enforce it. Like the Sarda Act the executive can almost make it a dead letter and thwart the will of the nation for social reform. I am here in particular referring to the Immoral Traffic Act which was passed by the U. P. Legislative Council. No steps so far have been taken to enforce it. It was with some difficulty that the measure was passed by the House and now the Government is sleeping over it. In the June session of the Council, attention was drawn to it but the answers were not at all satisfactory.

'Similarly in regard to the Naik Girls' Protection Act, it took the Government about six years to provide funds for establishing a rescue home for girls removed from brothels. The story of the Naik girls is as painful as it is shameful. It is a custom with this unfortunate community that their girls are brought up to prostitution and their boys marry among the Jats. The result is that minor girls are removed from the protection of their parents and trained from their early childhood to the shameful profession. An act was passed to prevent minor girls being sold or kept in places of bad repute but vigilance has been very lax. And in the second place, no funds were provided to found a home for these unfortunate victims when removed from places of ill-repute.

'It is my firm conviction that unless pressure is brought upon the Government, their machinery moves very slowly and the conscience of man is inert. Therefore, my sisters, agitate, and agitate vigorously to root the social evils in our society. Every day that passes is a reminder to us of our humiliation. Be it Immoral Traffic or the question of Naik Girls, Government machinery must be made faster.

'As your representative in the local legislature I feel it my duty to place before you the question of women's representation on the local bodies, i. e., the municipal and district boards.

'So far as my knowledge goes I have nothing but praise for women who were in the various boards. In particular I am acquainted with the work done by Begum Habibullah Sahiba who was your representative in Lucknow and Mrs. Bhatnagar who was in Cawnpore. Informations from various other places make me bold to say that women have shown great public spirit, genuine interest and unvalued devotion to the public cause. I will therefore, on your behalf put forward the claim that women should get far larger representation on the local bodies than at present. (In passing I may add, there is only one member in each.) In the second place, you have to consider the question of the system of representation. I have never loved nomination. It muzzles your opinions, cramps your individuality and is subject to mischievous wire-pulling. We have ample evidence to say that in the last elections, the use of the power of nomination was misapplied. Instead of nominating women who have done some public service or who are educated, cultured and public-spirited, in some cases, persons have been nominated who are then to support a particular party or person. The practice of nomination stands self-condemned and I strongly urge its abolition.

'I want joint electorate for women to the local bodies. I will not personally countenance any communal electorate in this sphere. It is just the place where we can begin the experiment of joint electorate. But I want reservation of seats for such time till men have been able to forget their prejudice against women as women and treat them as colleagues.

'Regarding reservation, I endorse the view of my friend and predecessor as president, Kunwarani Lady Maharaj Singh, that we should get one-third of the seats in the education and health committees and about similar representation on the general body. It is for you to lay down the definite proportion.

There are on the anvil of the Legislative Assembly four social reform bills. Dr. Deshmukh's Bill for giving property rights to women; Dr. Bhagwan Das's bill for inter-caste marriage; Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja's bill for removal of untouchability, and another bill for tightening the Sarda Act. I give my whole-hearted support to the principles of all the bills and urge upon the Government and the M. L. A.'s to pass these measures. The measures are long overdue and there is no reason to delay. Social reform, I know, is not a matter of bills and resolutions but legal recognition of the right to change gives an impetus to modernise our social organisation. In India instead of the law going a step forward to help social reform I find the legal machinery even fails to register the changes that have been going on. I ask you who represent the best element in the women's population of Oudh to give your verdict for these measures of social reform.

In the last winter, a conference was held in Calcutta to consider the question of crime against women which is on the increase particularly in the Punjab, Rajputana and Bengal. In our province in the western districts and in the districts on the borders of the States we find them in a large number. The question is an intricate one and we have not enough facts in our possession to come to a decision as to the method of checking it. I think we should appoint a sub-committee to go into the question and suggest ways and means to combat the evil. I will not go into further detail at present but will wait for the report of the committee.

Lady Srivastava next appealed for the relief of beggars. She said that twice the proposal was brought before the Legislative Council and the Government spokesmen had expressed sympathy and promised to look into the matter when the financial position improved. Like the ancient 'payble when able', this debt to the sufferers of social neglect and apathy had ever been paid. The finances never improved and the municipalities, even if they made any attempt to start such a thing, were discouraged and so the miserable lot of the beggars remained very much the same. She urged that it was the duty of women to take active part in healing the social disease. 'Men are proverbially callous', she remarked, and if we do not like them human suffering will never end.' She appealed to every woman present at the conference, whether she was a member of a local board or not, to move their respective boards to establish homes where the maimed and disabled could get shelter, where the sick could be treated and the hungry fed.

The president thanked the members of the Oudh Women's Conference for their kindness in giving her a patient hearing. She said it was her endeavour to give her best to the women's cause and she hoped they would be able to do something substantial for the women in general.

### Resolutions

The first resolution was moved by the chair and passed all standing expressing sense of loss at the deaths of Mrs. Kamala Nehru, Dr. Anur, Dr. J. T. Sunderland Mrs. Sahamat, treasurer of the conference.

The conference called upon the municipal authorities to provide adequate facilities for the introduction of compulsory education for girls in areas where it already exists for boys. It protested the omission of girls from schemes of medical inspection in schools conducted by the Government and called upon the provincial Government to take up the work already begun by the conference committee in Lucknow. The conference requested the Government and all local bodies to provide adequate arrangements in schools for play-grounds and physical culture.

The conference gave its support to Mr. B. Das's Bill to amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act and other Bills intended to improve the status of women; but felt that such piecemeal legislation should be replaced by lines affecting all the rights of women. The conference requested the authorities to take more rigid steps towards the prevention of traffic in women and children and urged the necessity for proper rescue homes.

Another resolution said that it was the declared policy of Government to keep the consumption of intoxicating liquors at the minimum and it protested against the opening of new liquor shops as being contrary to that policy. The conference believed that it indicated that the desire for increased revenue was being allowed to determine the excise policy, and since one of the major concern of the conference was the welfare of family and community life it called upon the Government to discover other sources of income, thus guarding the public from the drink evil.

The conference viewed with alarm the increased number of cases of abduction of women and as a practical measure to check this evil urged the railway authorities to appoint women officers at railway stations who may render assistance to women travellers and recommended that women be appointed on the Railway Board and Local Advisory Boards.

By another resolution the conference called upon the Government of India to introduce an All-India Maternity Benefit Bill on the same lines as in Bombay, C. P. and Madras.

The conference called upon the Government and local bodies to establish poor houses for beggars and introduce legislation to prevent begging in public places.

In conclusion, the conference resolved that the District and Municipal Boards Acts, as amended in 1935, be so amended as to introduce the principle of election for women's special representation on these bodies and that a substantial reservation of seats be made for them in the general bodies as well as on the Education and Health Committees.

## The Cochin Women's Conference

Problems connected with women's uplift, such as the removal of illiteracy, the reservation of appointments in the Educational service, and infant welfare, birth control and maternity came on the tapis and resolutions were passed at the annual session of the Cochin Women's Conference held on the 31st October 1936 at the Sirkar Girls' High School, Ernakulam, Dr. Gowri Amma presiding.

The Conference was opened by *Srimati V. K. Lakshmiakutti Nethyaramma*, the consort of His Highness, the Elaya Raja, the Permanent President of the central organisation.

Mrs. *Maamakshi N. Menon*, M. L. C., welcomed the delegates in a short speech and paid a tribute to *Srimati Nethyaramma* for the services she had rendered to the cause of women's uplift in general and in particular for the liberal support and patronage she had extended to the Association. She regretted that though they were now holding the 11th annual session, they had not organised themselves effectively and their achievements were not commensurate with their importance.

## OPENING ADDRESS

*Srimati Nethyaramma* declared open the Conference. She said she was not a stranger in their midst, and she would prefer to have a hearty talk with them. She admitted that the Association had not accomplished much so far, but they could take legitimate credit for the awakening that was now found among the women of Cochin. Thirty years ago such a gathering of women, to which men were also invited as observers, would have been unthinkable and would have created a flutter in the dovecots of orthodoxy. Women now freely attended men's gatherings and participated in debates. There was a change of outlook among women with regard to dress, jewellery, social movements and even education. The progress made was no doubt insufficient, but it was safer to advance slowly but steadily. *Festina Lente* should be their watchword. She appealed to her sisters to give up their old superstitions and to march forward with the times. She referred to the need for a proper building to house the Association and hoped the Government would fulfill their promise without delay. She also laid stress on the development of cottage industries and the encouragement of handicrafts among women as means to augment their resources and to promote their economic prosperity.

After light refreshment and music the president delivered an address.

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

In the course of her address the President referred to the unique position occupied by Indian women in ancient India and their present position and stressed that women should realise their responsibilities as citizens, and that they should co-operate with men in social service. She also urged that they should take a more intelligent interest in matters relating to the administration. She emphasised the need for the starting of a campaign for the removal of illiteracy among women and for spreading knowledge about health, infant welfare and maternity. Schools should be started for adult education. She also suggested that women who were not physically able to bear the burden of motherhood should have birth control.

## Resolutions

Several important resolutions were then discussed and passed. After thanking the Government for the last year's grant, the Conference requested the Government to grant Rs. 300 this year to the Association to send delegates to the All-India Conference to be held at Ahmedabad.

There was a discussion on the resolution of *Mrs. E. V. Mathew* requesting the Government that unmarried lady teachers should be appointed in all the primary schools of the State. She urged that unmarried women teachers would alone be able to devote undivided attention to pupils of tender age studying in the primary classes.

*Mrs. Tarian Varghese* opposed the resolution and *Srimathi Lakshmi Kuttu Nethyaramma* supported the view that married teachers must have the required patience and tact, and that in any case only teachers who had put in at least 15 years' service should be appointed in primary schools. The resolution was amended to the effect that women teachers of experience should be appointed to teach in primary classes irrespective of the circumstances whether they were married or unmarried.

After adopting some more resolutions, the Conference came to a close with the President's concluding remarks.

## The Trivancore Women's Conference

The annual session of the Travancore Constituency of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Trivandrum on the 7th. November 1936 at the Women's College Hall, *Mrs. Raman Tampi* presided.

*Mrs. Rukmani Rama Kurup* in welcoming the gathering said that they had all assembled in a spirit of social service. The towns were few and the countryside much larger in extent in comparison and the duty of educating the women of the countryside had to be tackled in an efficient manner.



Mrs. Raman Thampi said that they had met under very good auspices as the All-Travancore Conference was a fitting prelude to the celebration of the Birthday Week of H. H. the Maharaja, who was completing his 24th year of age and four years of glorious rule on the 13th instant.

The object of the Central All-India Women's Conference, she said, was the promotion of the education of both sexes at all stages and the tackling of questions affecting the welfare of women and children. The resolutions tabled had been framed conformably to these objects. In Travancore women were not suffering from the disabilities which their sisters elsewhere in India were suffering from. In point of education, the women of Travancore were not backward. But that was not enough. Subjects like compulsory medical examination, compulsory primary education, hostels for girl students etc., deserved serious consideration of this conference. Higher education now given to girls in colleges at present with certain additional subjects not included in the present educational syllabus, she thought, would remove any complaint against their shortcomings in practical life in or out of the house. The main work with which they in Travancore had to concern themselves, she said, were rural reconstruction, Harijan work, indigenous industries and child welfare. As regards rural reconstruction the President was happy to note that Her Highness Princess Karthikai Thirunal had inaugurated recently a scheme for the purpose and Sri Thankamma had been put in charge of the work. Several constituencies had started long ago under this head and were showing good progress. Regarding Harijan work, she said it was time that women of Travancore noted what their sisters were doing elsewhere. They should also take to the organisation of stores and exhibitions. In regard to child welfare and maternity it was necessary to pursue the work they had undertaken with greater zeal. Her Highness the Maharani had, as the President of the last session of the All-India Women's Conference, given a lead in the matter of solving women's problems by her thoughtful and invigorating speech and by her presence during the conference. It was highly desirable that it should be followed with advantage in the interest of the women of Travancore. In whatever capacity their lot in life might be cast as wife, mother, daughter, or sister, it had to be remembered that they were the interpreters of ancient culture, and the custodians of their civilization. If the movement was worked with this in view, success was bound to come.

The reports of the different constituencies were then read.

#### Resolutions

The afternoon session commenced at 3 p. m. when resolutions were passed.

The Conference offered its felicitations to the Maharaja on his being the recipient of the title G. C. I. E. and expressed its loyalty and gratitude to the Maharaja and Maharani Sethu Parvathi Bai for the patronage extended to the All India Women's Conference held at Trivandrum last year. The Conference thanked the Government and the public for all the help and encouragement in connection with the last session of the All-India Women's Conference.

The Conference emphatically repeated its demand for (a) the introduction and enforcement of compulsory primary education throughout India; (b) furthering adult education in towns and villages by means of such measures as (i) circulating libraries, (ii) Films, (iii) Radio and Broadcasting.

The Conference recorded its firm conviction that women should be adequately represented (a) on the Legislature (b) on the Municipal and other local bodies and requested the Government to make adequate provision for annual medical inspection in all Primary, Middle and High Schools of the State, to make Domestic Science a compulsory subject in all schools for girls.

The conference opined that graded courses be started in schools and colleges to inculcate civic consciousness in citizens. Urging the need for a better understanding of and greater attention to the physical and psychological needs of children, the Conference urged that mothers' classes, teachers' training centres, child welfare centres, nursery schools and Kindergarten schools be started.

The conference disapproved of professional begging and urged the need for legislation for its prevention and called upon the public to co-operate in the task by diverting their charities to the support of such institutions as poor homes.

The Conference appealed to Indian States where the Sarda Act did not apply, not to furnish any facilities for the performance of child marriages in their areas and to take immediate steps for preventing the practice by legislation.

The conference appealed to women to take a more active part in rural uplift

work, and urged the need for training centres for social workers being started in the different provinces.

The women of Trivandrum were urged to band themselves and work earnestly for a cleaner and healthier Trivandrum as the Civic Group was doing in Madras.

The conference urged the early abolition of all legal disabilities affecting women and its whole-hearted support to all bills introduced in the Provincial and Central Legislatures for their removal.

The Government was requested to consider the claims of women to be appointed at least as clerks in all the departments not now thrown open to women. The need for arousing the interest of the public in questions of food values and creating a public opinion against the prevalent adulteration of food was stressed in another resolution.

## The Madras Women's Conference

The Madras constituent Conference of the All India Women's Conference was held at the Madras Seva Sadan, Kilpauk, Madras on the 28th. November 1936 under the presidency of Mrs. B. Rama Rao. The Conference was largely attended. The proceedings commenced with a prayer by Srimathi Visalakshi Ammal.

Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi, in requesting Mrs. B. Rama Rao to take the chair, said that their President was not new to Madras. While she was in Madras, she took a great deal of interest in securing for women municipal franchise. While she was in England, she did a great deal of work to remove the many misrepresentations spread in England about Indian conditions and Indian women. The speaker did not think that they could get a worthier person to preside over their Conference than Mrs. B. Rama Rao.

### Presidential Address

Mrs. B. Rama Rao, in thanking them for the honour of electing her to the Chair, said that she had spent the best part of her life in Madras. She deemed it a great privilege to be invited by them to preside over that Conference. She was much interested in women's work ever since her undergraduates days, and she thought that she maintained that interest even at this stage, although for a long time she had been away from Madras. The Women's Group in Madras had done good work. She felt that, at the present moment, the opportunity for work for Indian women was very much greater than what it was in the days when she was young. There was a great deal of preparatory work to be done in connection with the coming elections, which was going to arouse women to a sense of their responsibility. They might boast of having a franchise. But in her opinion the acquiring of the vote was not an end in itself. It was the use of the vote that was of great importance. That object must constantly be kept in view, in order to educate the new electors as to how to use their votes correctly. That was not an easy task. They must be able to send the right people to the Legislatures. Women's organisations must be able to draw up questionnaires and to insist that right type of people were chosen. There were various social laws which must ultimately be changed by the legislature of each province. To do that, a certain amount of public opinion must be aroused and that public opinion could be created by propaganda.

Continuing, she said that she had travelled during the last two months in different parts of India, and wherever she had gone, her instinct had been to find out how women's organisations were working in each town. She would be justified in saying that in Madras she felt a sense of great disappointment, and there was so little effort made in comparison with the education that had spread in different parts of India. In many towns, there were brilliant Indian women, but they were not prepared to devote some amount of time for organisation and work of this character. To her, it seemed that the two things which Indian women lacked were discipline and organisation. They had found again and again that Indian women had great enthusiasm to begin a piece of work, but they had not enough discipline and training.

These characteristics were essential for women. They should instil into women courage. If women had gift in them, they could stir up municipalities and societies and get what they wanted. She was glad to find that women had achieved great victory in the recent elections, and she expressed the hope that through their municipal victory they would be able to progress very rapidly. But she wanted them also to take interest in the coming elections to the Assembly. At the present moment that was matter of great importance. It was their duty to spare no energy in getting the right type of candidates elected to the Legislatures.

Mrs. Rama Rao, continuing, said that the condition of Indian women had to be improved. Essentially, orthodoxy must give way with regard to certain questions concerning the health and education of women. There were certain ideals, customs and traditions, which belonged to their homes and which were associated with orthodoxy of which they were proud. But there were certain other customs against which they must constantly carry on a campaign, not forgetting that the things which were good ought to be preserved for their society. A constant campaign must be carried on for the better provision of health arrangements for women all over India. Villages were badly served. Next to health, came education. Anyone who was interested in the mental, material and spiritual progress of the country must realise that birth control was a topic which they could not eliminate entirely. Then, there was the question of legal status for women. There were several laws which affected Indian women and she found that these would be discussed when they considered the resolutions.

She concluded by asking them to chalk out a definite piece of work to be done immediately. Women of the world should stand together. She hoped that the International Alliance in Europe, with which she was connected, would be shortly invited to India, and then the women of the world would have an opportunity to see the progress they had made. She wished the Conference success.

#### Annual Report.

Mrs. Kuriyan next read the annual report of the Madras Constituency for the year 1936. The report stated that a social feature of the activities during the period was the support given by its members to the Civic Group formed in the city for making Madras a healthier and more beautiful city to live in. This gave an opportunity to most of the members to make a detailed investigation of the various requirements of the city. On several occasions, members were invited by the European Association, the Rotary Club, the Y. W. C. A., the Y. M. C. A., etc. to express their views on subjects, like parks and playgrounds, markets, housing, drainage and water-supply, etc. The members still continued to work most enthusiastically in this field. Mrs. Buck, the moving spirit of the Civic Group, was one of the staunch supporters of the Conference.

Another special feature of the year, the report stated, was enthusiasm and interest evinced by some of the members in the Leper Day campaign of this year. It must be stated that the leprosy relief work started in the city three years ago was an outcome of the Conference. In 1933, one of the items of social work selected was "tackling the leprosy problem in the city". The Standing Committee member for the year was briefed to go into the ways and means of giving effect to this resolution, and it was not a more accidental coincidence that, while forming the preliminary committee which eventually organised the City Leprosy Relief Council, the Surgeon-General called upon Mrs. Kuriyan to be the Secretary of the Council. She still continued to be the Secretary of this Council. It was gratifying to note that the Leprosy Relief work had progressed very satisfactorily. Considerable enthusiasm and public opinion had been aroused, especially among the student population.

Besides the opening of leprosy clinics in the city, a scheme for constructing reserve blocks in the Leper Settlement, Chingleput, for segregating infectious patients from the city, was sent to the Government in April this year. The Government had now accepted the scheme and the construction of the buildings would shortly be commenced.

Special mention must be made about the rescue undertaken by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, an important member of the constituency. She was providing a home and shelter for so many women and destitute children. Her generosity and her untiring efforts were entirely responsible for the success of this home.

The slum improvement work carried on by the Social Section Secretary, Sri Visalakshmi Ammal, was another outstanding feature of women's activities in Madras. The Madras constituency had been peculiarly privileged this year in having Mrs.

Swaminatham, a member of this constituency, as the Hon. Organising Secretary of the A. I. W. C. They felt that in honouring her, the All-India Conference honoured them.

They were proud to report that two members of the constituency were elected to the Municipal Council this year, and a third one as Alderman.

In conclusion, the Committee took the opportunity of conveying their grateful thanks to all the members for their co-operation and active support in the work of the Conference.

#### Proceedings and Resolutions

The following resolutions were then put from the chair and passed :—

"This meeting resolves to congratulate His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore and his Government on throwing open all the State temples to Hindus of all classes, and hopes that this lead will be followed up by all the Indian States.

"This meeting calls upon suitable women to come forward to contest the elections for the general seats through the general constituencies, in addition to the reserved seats for women, and it appeals to all political parties in the country to put up and return as many deserving women as possible for the general seats.

Dr. (Mrs) Mathulakshmi Reddi next moved the following resolution : "This public meeting of women gives its whole-hearted support to the social bills, with the necessary amendments proposed by the All-India Women's Conference at its half-yearly meeting, and appeals to the members of the Assembly to unanimously pass those Bills into law."

She said that the general condition of women was very pathetic, and unless Bills like the one introduced by Dr. Deshmukh in the Assembly were passed, women's condition could not be bettered. A great deal of opposition to the Bill was to be noticed, and she appealed to women to carry on a vigorous campaign in support of the Bill and also to take such measures for improving the health of women.

Mrs. Ammu Swaminatham seconded the resolution. She said that Dr. Deshmukh had written to the Women's Indian Association that the Government would support his Bill only as far as the interest of widows were concerned. The Government's attitude, she considered, was a wrong one, and she hoped that the Association would agitate for giving the benefits of the Bill to daughters as well.

Srimathi Alamelumangathayarammal and Srimathi Saraswati supported the resolution, which was carried.

Mrs. Dorothy Jinarajadasa moved "that this Conference appeals to the Government to have an inquiry made as to conditions of child labour in the city of Madras and the whole presidency, particularly with regard to the beedi boys, and tailor shop boys, and to bring in legislation that will prevent children from being overworked, underpaid and harshly treated in the workshop. At least the hours of work and conditions, and special provision for adolescents and children that are laid down in Chapter V of the Factory Act, should be made to apply to all workshops employing children and young men."

Mrs. Timothy seconded the resolution and it was carried.

The following resolution was then put from the chair and carried :—

"This public meeting is of opinion that all temples which derive any income should be brought under the jurisdiction of the Hindu Religious Endowments Board, and the Board should apportion some of the income of all temples under them for the improvement of education and health of the people wherein these temples are situated.

"This meeting strongly recommends that famous centres of pilgrimage, such as Tirupati, Madura and Rameswaram where beggary is practised on a large scale, beggar homes should be established for the shelter and for proper care of the disabled beggars and for work houses for the able-bodied beggars."

Mrs. Achuta Menon moved the following resolution :—

"This public meeting of women is strongly convinced that 'untouchability' is a blot on any religion and a stigma, and urges the public to completely eradicate this evil."

Mrs. Menon said that it was not necessary to make a speech to appeal to them to remove this blot. They had now the noble example of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore, and they had before them the great and inspiring example of Mahatma Gandhi to follow. She appealed to them to make some tangible efforts to remove untouchability.

Srimathi Visalakshi Ammal, in seconding the resolution, appealed to the women present to do their bit to remove the curse. The evil was slowly dying out, but

women should make special efforts to teach the so-called Untouchables to be clean and tidy. She referred to the work done in the Gokulam Colony in Madras, and said that the way in which the colony was kept showed that the evil was remediable and what was needed was propaganda.

Srimathi Alamelumangathayarammal supported the resolution. The resolution was then carried unanimously.

The following resolutions were put from the chair and passed:

"This Conference demands that the Corporation of Madras and the Government do take immediate steps to tackle the beggar problem in the City of Madras, and to all charitable institutions and trusts in the city like the Ananda Samajama, the Langarkhanas etc., to co-operate with the Corporation and the Government to effectively prevent begging in public places.

"(a) This meeting of women appeals to the Hindu Religious Endowment Board as well as to the Trustees of the Hindu Temples that are still outside the jurisdiction of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board to enforce the law for the abolition of the Devadasi service in such temples and for prohibiting the dedication of girls and women into the temples. (b) It also appeals to the Board to prohibit the tapping of toddy and other intoxicating drinks from the trees belonging to the temples. (c) It also appeals to all public and private bodies and individual citizens of this Province to prohibit the tapping of toddy and other drinks from the trees belonging to them."

Mrs. Alexander moved and Mrs. Chourriappa seconded the following resolution:—

"This Conference emphatically protests against the various newspapers and magazines publishing obscene advertisements. It appeals to the Press, as a whole, to see that this pernicious practice is abolished. It also urges the Government to take necessary steps to make the provisions of the Indian Press Act sufficiently effective to put down this demoralising aspect of the Press."

The resolution was passed after some discussion.

The following resolutions were next adopted unanimously without any discussion:—

"This meeting strongly recommends to all political parties that in the selection of women candidates both for the new Assembly and for the new Council, preference should be given to women, who are selected by the organised and long-standing women's associations in the country as their representatives.

"This Conference appeals to the King George V Memorial Fund Committee to devote the amount collected for the establishment of a special cancer hospital in the city and for cancer clinics in the District Hospitals.

"This Conference recommends that Government should help the Corporation in every possible way in solving the housing problem in the city."

Mrs. Hensman moved: "This Conference calls upon the public for active support and full co-operation to work out the aims and ideals of the Women's Civic Group."

Mrs. Hensman said that the group discussed very important questions in an informal way, and its members were intent on effecting more real improvement. The topics they discussed included the improvement of parks and play grounds, markets, housing conditions in the city and the advancement of primary education. The members welcomed all assistance from the women of the city.

Miss Cowdrey seconded the resolution and it was adopted unanimously.

Miss MacDougall moved: "This Conference urges that differentiation should be made in the status of the Matriculation and the School Final Examination and that the S. S. L. C. Examination be made different from an examination for entering the Universities."

Miss MacDougall said that it was time that parents and others realised that education in their schools was given chiefly for the purpose of entering the Universities. There had been complaints from the Universities that a large number of students not equipped for University studies entered them and it was stated that that was the main reason of the large failures. The general education given should hereafter be suitable to the general needs of everyday life. She said that the present School Final System was working satisfactorily and would suggest that in any reform it might be left in tact but a separate entrance examination might be held for those desirous of entering the Universities. Such a scheme would greatly relieve both the Universities and the schools.

Dr. Stokes seconded the resolution which was then carried unanimously.

Miss Gnanadikam moved: "This Conference urges that there should be a great expansion and improvement in the education of women in Home Science.

"This Conference urge that every large province in India should have a special school for Home Science."

The speaker said that people had not sufficiently realised the greatness and importance and the dignity of the Home Science. Mother-craft included so many sciences and it was necessary that the subject should be specially taught by trained persons. She was glad to inform the Conference that the Madras University had taken the first steps in the direction of including the subject for a degree course and a Committee had been formed to draw up the scheme, studies and the syllabus. The Women's Conference should take special interest in the subject.

Mrs. *Thiery* seconded the resolution which was then adopted unanimously.

Miss *Machensis* next moved: "While thanking the Government of Madras for financing a welfare worker to train local women for the proper enforcement of the Act of Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Children and to organise a Rescue Home, we earnestly urge that adequate grants should be given both to the Vigilance Shelter and to the Rescue Home for their efficient and continuous working".

Mrs. *Dadabhai* seconded the resolution. The resolution was next adopted unanimously.

Miss *Black* moved: "This Conference urges the extreme necessity of making voluntary efforts for promoting the desire for literacy".

Miss *Black* said that literacy by itself was no virtue at all. There must be the keenness to learn and hear and read. They must cultivate the reading habit of the people. A large percentage of the pupils who attended primary schools dropped into illiteracy after that stage. Those who were interested in the welfare of the country should see that the desire for literacy among the people was increased. Literacy was a means to open out a new world. The speaker also hoped that the Women's Associations would associate themselves with the Library Association which was doing good work in the direction.

Mrs. *Devasahayam* in seconding the resolution referred to a method that she had devised to teach to read and write Tamil in a few days. It was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. *Tampoe* moved: "This Conference expresses the conviction that carefully organised and regulated hostels for women students and better quarters for women teachers are urgently needed".

Mrs. *Tampoe* said that when she was asked to speak on the subject, she inspected about half-a-dozen women's hostels and found that all of them were far from satisfactory. She knew that most of them could be improved. She had found in India the people were inclined to minimise the privileges they had and to exaggerate the difficulties. They would not also trouble themselves to ascertain the existing conditions. She hoped that the Conference would take practical steps to improve the conditions in the hostels.

Mrs. *Ammu Swaminathan* in seconding the resolution said that some of the other constituents of the All-India Women's Conference had taken up the question in hand and the speaker was sure that Madras also would do that. If the Conference would take the question in right earnest, sufficient help would be forthcoming. The resolution was carried.

A resolution requesting the Government and the Madras Corporation to tackle the beggar problem was adopted.

Mrs. *L. Panikkar*, who moved the resolution, said that the presence of beggars in public places materially affected civic welfare. While it was inhuman to neglect the disabled and the destitute, it was objectionable to allow able bodied men to beg. Most of them being the victims of contagious diseases they were a source of danger to public health. To solve the problem, it was necessary to house the beggars. There should be a comprehensive legislation to prohibit begging in public places. All beggars should be segregated and medically examined. There should be almshouses, almshouses and orphanages to house them and industrial concerns to make use of the available labour. Expenditure on this account could considerably be reduced by utilising the existing charitable institutions and by practising strictest economy in all matters. A fair proportion of the King George V. Memorial Fund and of the amount allotted for rural reconstruction might be utilised for the purpose. Funds could also be raised by appeal to the public and in other ways.

Mrs. *Wattal*, who spoke on the question of housing at the Conference, said that they all knew the pernicious effects of bad housing, and congested areas, of ill-ventilated rooms and dismal surroundings. They were also aware of the high mortality rate in the City. The slum population of the City had increased, it was stated, by 40,000 between 1921 and 1931. It was also estimated that over 10,000 people lived in the streets of Madras. It was estimated that about 6,000 huts and 22,500 houses in the City were over-crowded. The increase in the number of houses was not keeping pace with the increase in the population.

## The All Bengal Women Workers' Conference

The All-Bengal Women Workers' Conference was held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta on the 11th. October 1936 under the presidency of Mrs. Nirmal Nalini Ghose of Nadia. About 200 delegates from the mofussil and the city attended the Conference.

In her address, Mrs. Ghose appealed for the remoulding of society and the body politic of the present day in the light of the ideals of equality and independence. If that was done the sufferings and obstacles confronting them would melt away in no time.

Mrs. Ghose next referred to the repressive measures taken by the Government and the continued detention of the sons of the soil without open trial, criticised the problem of untouchability and appealed for the development of cottage industries.

Mrs. Mohini Devi, President of the Reception Committee, while giving due tribute to the Women's Protection Society and similar institutions, for their services to the nation, appealed to women themselves to take their courage in both hands in order to eradicate this vice against womanhood. The unemployment problem among all sections of society, she remarked, had brought women out of their hearths and homes and the matter required careful handling as women of the present-day had in many cases to earn a living for themselves and their families.

### Post Tagore's Address

The second day's session of the Conference was held on the next day, the 12th. October 1936. Post Rabindranath Tagore addressed the ladies assembled in the conference. The proceedings commenced with "Bande Mataram", India's National Anthem.

In the course of his address the Post observed: The birth of this earth, as every geologist knew, was preceded by tremendous revolutions in the Nature's order. Millions of years after that there came on the earth the first faint signs of life which brought along with it the first feelings of pang. Mightier and greater than the blind force of nature this throes of life was accepted by man.

But it was not man engaged in persistent and pitiless struggle but the woman who imbibing this gift from nature set herself to the formation of the society. The dawn of human civilisation found the matriachal system in force, the mother being the centre. Man employed his strength and intelligence in building up of the civilisation. That however let loose a centrifugal tendency—a tendency to break it up but woman's work was to prevent it from being split up. The bounds of the family and clan widened but the mother remained the centre.

A time, however, came in the history of the human civilisation when man asserted his strength and the social system became patriarchal. He began to extend the scope of civilisation by the force of arms while woman confined herself to a narrower field like housework and bringing up children. Great civilisations like that of India, Assyria, Egypt and Babylon were created: Politics, religion and economics were produced but women had very little direct hand in them. She remained more or less in the background. In the strenuous work of creating the civilisation women had but little place. In the constant struggle and unrelenting warfare of those days women could play their part. Whether it be due to the injustice of men or by the laws of nature their contribution to the production of civilisation had been but little although it could not be gainsaid that indirectly, in many things, women had lent their inspiration. That had resulted in the failure of a harmony—a co-ordination between the intellect, the efforts of men and women. The bitter effects of this were evidenced to-day.

Civilisation, the Post proceeded, had its foundation in human sacrifice. In all ages man forsaking their individual will had sacrificed themselves at its altar. But the greatest sufferers from laws made by them had been women—weak and helpless. They had all along obeyed the restraint and thereby acknowledged their miseries. They had been doing this till now thinking that self-torture brings purity. They had portrayed God to be a cruel task-master who could be propitiated by fast and privation.

Women had been debarred from participating in the work of civilisation and consequently their knowledge had been limited. Hence those superstitious and blind beliefs which were never found among men were cherished by women as if these were a

necessary part of their being. This ignorance and superstition which had accumulated among them for ages had been retarding progress of men. That illiteracy and superstition which had enveloped the entire country had its root in the secluded corners of our home.

The only redeeming feature of the situation, Dr. Rabindranath went on to say, was the awakening consciousness of women witnessed even in the East. Everywhere it had been realised that seclusion of our women in homes had done irreparable injury. The Poet had travelled all over the world and almost everywhere seen the new signs. In Mahomedan countries like Persia, where customs regarding women were unduly severe, women had been educated and were now taking their rightful place in the society. The progress of women in Japan was known to all. In China women had taken in their hands the defence of their motherland. Conditions in Spain would tell the same tale. To save their motherland they had not hesitated to take part in the bloody warfare.

If would be wrong to suppose that these women in those countries had given up their womanly virtue and imitating men. There could be no more serious mistake to think that women's attainment would achieve their fullness in their limited sphere alone. It was women alone who could save this civilisation which was proceeding to its goal of destruction through a thorny path stained with blood. Civilisation made by man was in the melting pot. It was in Western countries where man-made civilisation had flourished most. This one-sided civilisation, the savants of those countries had opined, was in its way to dissolution since it had not been supplemented with and mellowed by the womanly intellect and sentiments.

Just at the time when the situation had seemed hopeless, women had entered the arena. Even a slight vestige of the civilisation would remain after its impending dissolution. It would be women's sacred task to create a new civilisation on its ruins. Man's intellect and woman's heart acting in union would bring about that new state of things. Then and then only they would be able to take their rightful place.

But before they aspire to do that, warned the Poet, they must assert themselves, remove their ignorance and refuse to bow down to blindness and superstition. They must be brighter in intellect and have a wider outlook. Indian women were never to think for a moment that they were lowly and downtrodden. They were to discard their age-long ignorance and rise to the occasion. The new age was coming.

#### Resolutions

A number of resolutions were then passed. They recommended that an All Bengal Mahila Sangha was to set up on communal lines having its branches in every town and if possible in every village in Bengal. A committee would be formed with 20 members from Calcutta and 40 members from mufasil.

The Conference condemned the future constitution as harmful to the country's interests and recommended that the policy of Indian National Congress should be followed in this regard. The Sangha would help the women candidates set up by the Congress.

The Conference regarded that the only remedy to remove unemployment was the abolition of capitalism. It should be the aim of the Sangha to help the unemployed with money or promotion of arts and crafts in this country.

The existing repressive laws were condemned and their abolition was demanded. The demand was also made of freedom of Press, individual liberty and right of holding meetings without hindrance.

The Conference expressed its dissatisfaction at the light punishment passed on the offenders at the retrial of the Khorda Govindpur case and requested the Government to file an appeal against the decision so that a heavier sentence might be passed on them. The Conference further drew the attention of the Government and the public to crimes against women in certain districts in East and North Bengal and suggested that Government should pass heavier sentences on the offenders which would have the effect of lessening the number of incidents.



# British India and Indian States

## The Conference of Princes & Ministers on Federation

A Joint Conference of Indian Princes and their Ministers, held at Bombay on the 30th. October 1936 under the auspices of the Princes Chamber under the chairmanship of the *Maharaja of Dholfur*, passed a resolution expressing the opinion that the Indian States' reply to the Government regarding Federation and matters connected therewith and arising therefrom should be a joint one on behalf of the States. This reply could be given only after a fortnight after the next meeting of the Princes' Chamber in February next, by which time the tour of the Viceroy's advisers in the Indian States would be finished. In the meanwhile, the States should adopt a non-committal attitude.

It was understood, *H. H. the Maharaja of Dholfur*, Chancellor, in his inaugural address, traced the history of Federation and the Government of India Act of 1935, the Princes' part therein and the opposition of a certain section of Princes to Federation. He next dealt with events leading to the present conference and said that Ministers, after careful consideration, had prepared a report containing additions, amendments, reservations and limitations to the draft Instrument of Accession.

The Chancellor referred to the discussions which have been held in the last six years in India and Britain on constitutional reforms and specifically mentioned the historic announcement by Princes at the first Round Table Conference of their readiness to accept the invitation of British India to join the All-India Federation, as a gesture of goodwill. It was, however, made clear then that States would naturally insist on the preservation of their sovereignty and internal autonomy. The consent of Rulers and States was also made condition precedent to Federation. On his return from England after the first Round Table Conference, he circulated his scheme of "confederation" prior to entering Federation. This was only partially accepted by the Chamber of Princes in 1932 but the result was that safeguards were introduced. With the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935 the British Government stood committed to the inauguration of Federation and States had now been asked to specify within a short time the terms whereon they would agree to federate. He honestly felt that the federal constitution was an intensely complicated one.

*His Highness* next referred to the meeting, in Bombay last August, of Ministers and the subsequent meetings of groups of Ministers, the Hydari Committee meeting in Bombay in September and the final conference of Ministers during the last three days, as the result of which Their Highnesses had the report in their hands containing the suggested reservations, limitations and additions to the draft Instrument of Accession. The Chancellor thanked the Viceroy for having decided to send representatives to tour the States in order to clear points of doubt and detail and for postponing their tour so as to enable Princes to hold the present consultations.

The Chancellor then proceeded to emphasise the need for a united effort and said, "If we are well organised, I can visualise the possibility of creating a liaison for all-India purposes only with vested interests outside the States and large accession of strength to this party later on could be had from the landed aristocracy and the aristocracy of wealth in British India. We could thus bring into being an All India Conservative Party which would exercise that influence in the destinies of this country which a party composed of stable elements always does in preserving and enhancing prosperity and healthy growth. His Highness stated that he had had discussions with Sir Akbar Hydari on this point and was hopeful of the biggest States agreeing to co-operate with the Chamber in order to create an united party.

The *Maharaja of Dewas* (junior) emphasised the necessity for not taking hasty action. He could not praise Federation for the simple reason that acceptance of Federation meant parting with sovereignty, however partial and hemmed in with reservations and limitations. It also meant giving a large portion of internal autonomy to the federal authority. He had not been convinced that joining the Federation was calculated to serve a superior purpose but on the contrary, he felt that joining the Federation was synonymous with weakness of States and also of the Empire. "My

nervousness sticks to me and persists," he said. Once a State signed the Instrument of Accession and agreed to federate, it deliberately and knowingly handed over its sovereignty appertaining to all subjects. He said, "Once the preliminaries are over, let the pros and cons be weighed, the implications understood and the consequences appreciated. And after that federate with a clear mind and an open heart if that were the advice of conscience. Once we enter the arena, come what may then, let us stick to your guns like good soldiers and bravely face whatever situation may arise. Until then let us not be in a hurry."

From what he had been able to grasp of the question of Federation, His Highness was more inclined to keep out of it than in it. Yet that was not his final considered judgment. Rulers had yet to get the draft Instrument of Accession recast and amended in the light of superior legal experience and knowledge. It was also essential to get expert opinion on the financial aspect of the problem. Apart from what was being discussed by the Conference of Ministers regarding reservations and limitations, there remained several outstanding aspects of the problem which had to be carefully examined. The Government of India Act had not been carefully examined section by section and the several sections that would affect States had not been scrutinised. Similarly the devastating influence of Federation over States and the position of the individual federating States had not been properly appreciated. Let it not be forgotten that the Act contained 120 sections, practically based on similar provisions in the federal constitutions of the United States of America and of Australia. Sections and provisions had been interpreted and commented on and a large body of judge-made law had grown upon the subject. It was but natural that when an Indian Federal court deals with cases arising out of sections of the India Act, it would be materially guided by those precedents. The general trend of those precedents had extended the sphere of Federation over the federating States to the detriment of their individual integrity.

The *Maharaja of Panna* said that with all the handicaps, Princes were masters of their own houses but under Federation, it would not be the case. Entering the Federation meant ceding sovereignty, their cherished possession. They could be reduced to the position of constitutional rulers. The Hindu ideals of Raja and Praja were likely to be obliterated.

He urged the examination of the other side of the picture also as he did not want to scare Princes. By agreeing to federate, they would for the first time be exercising influence in the Government of the country. British Indian parties would have to seek their support. It might be that they would be the first party to form the future Government of India under the reformed constitution, but this was possible only if they were united. He suggested the formation of a parliamentary party of Princes who should send their own representatives to the Assembly. This would make the British Indian politician seek their support.

The *Maharaja of Bikaner*, tracing the history of Federation, referred to his speech at the first Round Table Conference on behalf of the States Delegation and said that they had offered to consider the question of joining the Federation subject to three essential conditions, namely (1) that India retained the British connection being an equal partner in the British Commonwealth, (2) that equitable agreement was reached between all parties concerned to cover relations between the two Indias and (3) that sufficient safeguards were provided to protect and safeguard the Rulers' sovereignty. He urged that Princes should consider the unique nature of the Indian Federation. The picture was not yet complete. Several patches had yet to be filled. He also warned the Princes that if they lagged behind, things would go beyond their control and they might have to regret the occasion. He wished that Princes would consider this aspect and weigh the pros and cons of the problem and ultimately decide whether it was in their interest to federate or not.

\* Mr. Zutshi, *Dewan of Rewa*, said that his Maharaja from the beginning opposed Federation and still remained so. He suggested the appointment of three committees with experts, to examine and report on the financial and fiscal implications of Federation, to examine the reservations already suggested by the Ministers' Conference and to examine the constitutional rights of Princes.

It was understood, the *Dewan of Rewa* circulated a memorandum among the Princes and Ministers stating that it was essential that relations between the Crown and States should be defined (in other words, Paramountcy should be defined) and that this question should be immediately taken up and settled before the States agreed to join the Federation.

The *Dewan of Bampur* supported the idea of Federation as that would give the Princes a hand in the Government of the country. The Conference then adjourned.

The whole trend of to-day's discussions appeared to favour the appointment of two committees, one to report on the financial and fiscal implications of Federation with expert advice and the second to report on the constitutional implications of the various sections of the Government of India Act.

### 2nd. Day—Bombay—31st. October 1936

On resumption, this morning, a resolution was moved appreciating the work done by the Ministers' Conference and recommending that the report of the Conference be endorsed.

*Khan Bahadur Nabi Baksh Mahomed Hussain*, Prime Minister of Bahawalpur, is understood to have opposed endorsement of the resolution as it stood.

Sir P. Pattani, Chairman of the Ministers' Conference, said that if the Conference did not endorse the recommendations, it would mean that the work of the Ministers' Conference would be a waste. He appealed to the House not to torpedo the recommendations. He suggested that Princes should make them at least the basis of discussion with the Viceroy's representatives visiting States shortly.

After a brief discussion, the Conference is understood to have adopted the resolution appreciating the work of the Ministers' Conference and recommending that its report might form the basis of discussion with the Viceroy's representatives.

The *Nawab of Saadain* moved a resolution to the effect, without in any way wishing to modify the procedure laid down by the Viceroy regarding discussion between the States and the Viceroy's advisers, that it should be made possible for States as a whole, through their representatives, to discuss with the Viceroy's nominees (not the Viceroy's advisers, but special nominees appointed for the purpose) points of common interest to all States with a view to reaching unanimous decisions. This resolution was discussed at great length and adopted.

The *Jam Sahab of Nawanganar* moved a resolution to the effect that if a group of States belonging to the same region so wished, the Viceroy may be pleased to give facilities to representatives of these groups to discuss special common problems with the Viceroy's representatives jointly, for instance questions such as maritime interests, internal customs, etc.

made that as these recommendations contained new matters which the Conference had no time to go through, the Conference should endorse only points common to the Hydari Report which had been legally tested by Hyderabad's legal adviser, Mr. Monckton.

The *Maharaja of Bikaner* is understood to have suggested that as the Conference had already decided to discuss these common points with the Viceroy's representatives collectively, it was essential that they should go through them. His Highness urged the necessity to take a decision. It was pointed out that if there was difficulty about legal opinion on the new clauses they had an American jurist, Mr. Judge Warden, present at the Conference and he could help them.

The *Maharaja of Patiala* said that they had met in Conference for the purpose of taking a final decision. It was no use delaying a decision. They had had six years' time to study the question and no useful purpose would be served by delaying any further.

Mr. *Nabi Baksh Md. Hussain*, supporting the *Maharaja of Patiala's* suggestion, said that he understood that the Conference was called to give an indication—may be provisional and tentative—of the mind of Princes regarding the scheme of Federation, reserving the final "yes" or "no" till after the completion of the picture. Their Highnesses had plenty of material to come to a provisional and tentative conclusion whether Federation was feasible. Section 101 of the Government of India Act gave sufficient powers to the Governor-General to sovereignty of States and their Rulers. The subjects whereon they were going to federate had been clearly stated in the schedule 7 and he asked in which of these 47 subjects they did not dilute sovereignty and whether it was not possible by limitations to safeguard their present rights in these matters. Federal finance was also sufficiently clear. Therefore, he urged an immediate decision, which may be provisional and tentative.

It was then decided that the Conference should go through all the 10 points, clause by clause, and put its seal of approval on them.

Thereafter, with the help of Mr. Judge Warden, the Conference went through these points in detail and finally endorsed them without any change.

Two Sub-Committees were formed by the joint conference to examine the certain sections of the India Act and the financial implications of Federation with the Maharaja of Patiala and the Nawab of Bhopal as Chairmen respectively.

The two expert committees are to submit their reports to the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes before the end of January and these reports will be considered at the next meeting of the Chamber. It was pointed out that in view of the appointment of these two committees, the States have been asked not to give final replies to the Government.

Winding up the proceedings, the Chancellor thanked the Rulers and Ministers for making the Conference a success. He added that he was happy to say that in the point of numbers, keenness and output, it had been a record session.

The Jam Sahab then proposed the vote of thanks and said that all were grateful to the Chancellor for giving them a lead in matters that concerned them so vitally.

The Raja of Mandi seconded the vote of thanks which was carried with acclamation.

#### Resolutions

The following is the full text of the resolutions adopted by the Conference:—

(1) As it is desirable that after the meeting of the representatives and the Viceroy, there should be another conference of Princes to work out their proposals in the final form, the Viceroy may be approached to kindly extend the time by which the States are required to send in their proposals to a fortnight after the next session of the Chamber so that the States may take advantage of the occasion for collective discussions before they finally submit their proposals.

(Maharaja of Jamnir proposed, Maharaja of Patiala seconded, and passed unanimously).

(2) Resolved that a Committee may be constituted consisting of the following for the purpose of ascertaining the financial implications of Federation:

Chairman—Convener, Nawab of Bhopal; Princes Members: Maharana of Dholpur and Jam Sahab of Nawanganar; Minister Members: Sir P. Pattani, Sir Joseph Bhore (Bhopal), Mr. Kaula (Jind), and Mr. Kotak (Jamnir); Experts: Sir B. N. Mitra and Mr. Mann Subedar.

The limit of expenses Rs. 15,000 is guaranteed by Princes if funds are not available. The Committee is to report to the Standing Committee of the Chamber through the Chancellor by the end of January. Arrangements will be made to enable individual States to obtain advice from financial experts on their own cases.

(3) Resolved that a Committee may be constituted consisting of the following for the purpose indicated below:

Chairman: Maharaja of Patiala; Princes Members: Maharana of Dholpur, Maharaja of Bikaner, Maharaja of Dewas (Junior), Maharaja of Panna, Nawab of Rampur and the Yuvara of Limbdi. Minister Members: Sir Akbar Hydari (Hyderabad), Mr. Abbasi (Bhopal), Mr. Amarnath Attal (Jaipur), Sir M. Bapna (Indore), Mr. Manubhai Mehta (Bikaner), Mr. K. C. Neogi (Mayurbhanj), Mr. K. M. Panikkar (Patiala), Sir P. Pattani, Mr. Surve, Mr. Thombare, Sir Mirza Ismail (Mysore), Mr. Colvin, Sir V. T. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar (Travancore), Sir E. K. Shanmukham Chetti (Cochin), Col. Haksar, Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan, Mr. D. K. Sen, Dr. Zutshi, Mr. Zeid, Mr. Pawan Kanwarain, Pandit Dharam Narain, Mr. M. O. Sharma, Mr. Nahi Balah Mahomed Hussain, Mr. Maqbool Mahomed (Sachin) and two members of each regional group.

The work of the Committee will be to examine the provisions of the Government of India Act from the point of view of States' entry into Federation. Published reports of the regional groups will be made available to this Committee; the Committee to submit a report to the Standing Committee of the Princes' Chamber through the Chancellor by the end of January 1937.

(4) This Conference of Princes appreciates the work done by Ministers in making the reservations appertaining to federalist items in Schedule VII and framing general reservations to the draft Instrument of Accession and recommends that these may form the basis of discussion with Viceroy's representatives.

(Proposed by the Maharaja of Dewas (Jr.), seconded by Maharaja of Panna, and passed unanimously).

(5) This Conference recommends that the Viceroy be approached to consider the advisability of arranging that the general clauses, reservations and limitations be con-

sidered between nominees of the Viceroy and representatives of States at some convenient time about the dates of the next session of the Chamber of Princes, to be settled between the Viceroy and the Chancellor without prejudice to the programme and procedure of the special representatives' visit to States.

(Proposed by the Nawab of Sachin, seconded by the Ruler of Mandi, passed unanimously).

(6) This Conference of Rulers and representatives of States recommends to the Viceroy that where groups of States concerned no desire facilities be provided for special representatives to meet Rulers and representatives of States concerned collectively.

(Proposed by Jam Sahab of Nawanagar, seconded by the Maharaja of Patiala, passed unanimously).

(7) This Conference of Rulers and representatives of States adopts the recommendations contained in Part I of the report of the Ministers' Conference for incorporation in the draft Instrument of Accession received from the Government of India.

(Passed unanimously).

## The Indian States' People's Conference

### 5th. Session—Karachi—18th. & 19th. July 1936

The fifth session of the Indian States' People's Conference met in Karachi on the 18th. July 1936 under the presidency of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The following are extracts from Dr. Sitaramayya's presidential address.

"The problem of the States' people in India becomes somewhat complicated in respect of States where the communal aspect of the Indian problem forces itself to the front. The Nizam rules over 14 millions of whom about 13 millions are Hindus. Yet the State is a Mussalman State. Urdu is the court language and the medium of administration, although 7 millions are Andhras, 3 and a half millions are Maharshtas and 2 and a half millions are Karnatakas. In Bhopal the Nawab rules over a population of 7 lacs of whom 11 per cent (77,000) are Muslims and 89 per cent are Hindus. Urdu is the medium of instruction and administration. In Kashmir a Hindu Ruler holds sway over a Mussalman population whose agrarian grievances have given rise recently to disturbances which fortunately brought some redress to the sufferers. When we consider that there are nearly 600 States of varying importance it can be readily imagined that the tale of woe must be a long one and may not be narrated here in all its details. But we have enough material before us to realise that the States of India which are designed to be the Ulster of Federal India, constitute in themselves an underworld, the secrets of which would take years to unravel and decades to obliterate. They are the vestiges of an ancient civilisation and must perforce disappear sooner or later like their betters of the past. At present they only constitute a wedge driven by the British between the people of India and their ideal of a composite nationality. The British Government rules this land by creating a number of divisions, some based on territorial boundaries, some on communal delimitations and others on differences in interests. Thus it is that, while the Indian National Congress is striving to evolve and consolidate a composite Indian nationality, we witness the States and their people representing over a fourth in population of the whole country, not being allowed to participate in that process of national emancipation and national synthesis. This is the result of a territorial division of the country in which the States themselves are grouped under seven heads, a fruitful source of jealousy and discord.

#### THREATS WITH PRINCES

To-day the Princes are claiming that they are internally independent sovereigns and their rights and duties are only regulated by treaties. If so, the British Indian Government can have no right to interfere to protect the Princes from the rebellion of their people; there can be no treaties by which one nation through its Government can oblige itself to protect an individual Prince from the rebellion

of his people to depose him or to compel him to alter the autocratic form of his Government; in fact there is no known treaty which imposes upon the Crown, the British Government or the Indian Government such an absurd and one-sided obligation; with every obligation to protect the Prince from internal commotion, there is added, expressly or by necessary implication, the corresponding duty to investigate into the causes of the commotion and to remove them; in spite of this indisputable position which is recognised by the Indian States Inquiry Committee otherwise known as the Butler Committee (vide para 49 of their Report), every time there is trouble in the States, British Indian forces are at once despatched to put down the trouble and the causes are never investigated or removed.

Again a treaty means a contract or an agreement between one nation and another; there can be no treaty as there is none known to International Law between a nation and an individual. It is obvious therefore that any treaty in which one of the contracting parties is an Indian Prince is a treaty not with an individual Prince as a person but with his State which means his people represented by him as the constitutional head of the State. It follows therefore that the people of the States have the right to require or compel their constitutional heads, the Princes, to abrogate, vary or modify the treaties or any terms thereof and the Princes have no right to maintain the treaties against the wishes of the people whose representatives they are. The Crown also means not the individual sovereign of British Empire, but the King in Parliament; this has been made clear in Para 18 of the Butler Committee Report. The wishes of the people have never been ascertained or consulted during all the discussions either by the Princes themselves or the British Government and if a plebiscite is issued, I am sure, there will be an overwhelming majority in favour of annexation of all the States with what is known as British India and pensioning of the Princes.

Again Para 50 of the Butler Committee Report lays down that the British Government are bound to enforce any change in the forms of administrations in the States if there is a widespread and popular demand for the change subject to the condition that the Princes cannot be eliminated altogether. There is no reason therefore why if the States are so many independent States like Afghanistan or Persia, the people should not have the right to eliminate the Princes and establish any form of Government they please; but assuming that the British Government are bound to maintain the Princes and have the right to do so, they are, at any rate, according to the finding of the Butler Committee, bound to enforce the demand for a change in the form of Government, provided the demand is wide-spread and popular.

There is little doubt that to-day the demand is wide-spread. Yet the expected relief is not forthcoming. The fact is that no Government has ever been argued into parting with power or performance of duty. It is the right of people to rebel against misrule, even as it is right of Governments to 'hang' them for it; but quotations of law have never deterred rulers from continuing their misdeeds.

Dr. Sitaramayya then proceeded to discuss the inter-relations between the States' people and the Congress. He referred to the resolution passed on the subject at the recent Congress session at Lucknow, that "the struggle for Liberty within the States has, in the very nature of things, to be carried on by the people of the States themselves" and said: "When the Congress thus appears to decline help to the States' people the grounds on which it does so are that Congress-men would not be allowed to set foot on the very border of a State which it should enter to render any such help. Yes, but that itself is the fight. No fight is carried on, on the scene of dispute. On the other hand, when there is a cause of dispute, Mahatmaji's strategy has always been to narrow down the issue but widen out the Razzamatz, so that the scenes of fight become many. Instead of creating various fool, shall we say we can't do anything because we shall be refused admission to the one focus? But really there appears to be a misunderstanding on the part of the Congress that the States' people wanted or would want the Congress to fight their battles. Let us hasten to clear the mind of the Congress of this wrong belief."

In this connection Dr. Sitaramayya referred to the address delivered by Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai to the Mysore Bar on July 10 last year. Mr. Desai had given a professional legal opinion to the Princes, and this he did not do anew. "At the very outset, we owe it to ourselves," said Dr. Sitaramayya, "that we should unhesitatingly and unreservedly accept the view expressed by Mr. Desai in his

letter to: Rajendra Babu, the President of the Congress early in August last in which he stated, "I hold and I have always held that, if my opinion as a lawyer on any question were likely to adversely affect any public interest, I should not differentiate my position as a lawyer from my opinion as a public man for the purpose of justifying any such opinion. While in public life, I consider it right to exercise my profession so as not in the least degree adversely to affect public question or public good." This statement embodies so healthy a dictum that it may well serve as a rule of conduct for politicians who are active practising lawyers. On this ground then we have no quarrel with Mr. Desai although the legal opinion he has given is considered reactionary and retrograde from the standpoint of the States' people. But the unfortunate circumstance in this case is that Mr. Desai has implicitly adopted his legal view as his political view,—and that not merely as his individual political view, but as a political view he thought fit to put forward on a quasi-public occasion. That is the trouble and that is the criticism so far as the States' people are concerned."

Proceeding, Dr. Sitaramayya said: "Our mutual relations may now be here summarised. India is one and indivisible, call it Provinces or States, call its problems political or economic, call its organisations, conferences or Congresses. Its scheme of Government must one day be a genuine Federation, —a pyramid of States and Provinces with a Central Government, presiding over the various States and Provincial Governments, the latter enjoying full authority, based on the principle of Responsible Government and built up on the plinth of representative institutions. To bring this about, a pyramidal scaffolding is built by the nation in which the Congress forms the apex of a series of organisations connected with Trade Unions, Labour, Peasantry, Social and socio-economic institutions and the States' people. Without the factor at the top the organisation becomes truncated. Without the factors at the bottom it becomes baseless. The Congress is pledged to this ideal. If that is so, it should be the equal concern of the Indian National Congress to see that the internal anatomy of the States and the Provinces is equally well-secured for the people of the respective areas. In this view, the Lucknow Congress has stated that it stands for the same civil, political and democratic liberties for every part of India. Why then does it say that the struggle for liberty within the States has to be carried on by the people of the States themselves? It may be that delegates from the States are fewer in number than those of the Provinces. But the Congress is equally the Congress of the whole Indian nation. Its creed is equally binding upon the people of the Provinces. The high principle of Satyagraha and its corollary of suffering has been imbibed by the people of the States no less than of the provinces. In the general movement of Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha, the people of the States have taken their due share in common with the people of the Provinces and, apart from the generalised movement of 1930-31 and 1932-33, in particular cases calling for Satyagraha, the States' people have made their 'own experiments on the lines adopted by the people of the Provinces, in isolated cases."

Concluding the President said: "The problem is how are we to achieve this supreme object, to free ourselves from the incubus of these formidable powers in whose tight clutches we have been caught up. If your object is the same as that of the Congress, your methods and means cannot ultimately be other than those adopted by the Congress. In the history of the Congress are embedded the experience and wisdom of half a century, the hopes blasted, the plans furnished; and in it are equally enshrined the glories of success achieved through the principles of Truth and Non-violence. People ask whether the Congress is not more a failure than success. That is entirely failure in the Congress and its work of half a century. Every day the Congress is turning a new sod of earth from under its feet. To-day it is engaged in the complex task of rehabilitating Indian society so as to make Indian Swaraj a real blessing to its poor and starving millions,—not an aid to its wealthy citizens to hoard up more wealth. We are now confronted with the problem as to what we shall do at this juncture—copy western institutions to the modern spirit, harness in other words, the horse of modern ideas to the vehicle of ancient society. It is not necessary for every separate organisation in India to go over the same ground again. The lessons of contemporary life, no less than those of history, constitute a national asset which is the equal heritage of mankind. It is, therefore, the privilege of youth to begin where age ends,—not to do it all over again. We have to traverse a long and weary path with the double programme of fighting the enemy on the plane fixed by the Congress, and reconstructing national life on the

lines chalked out by it. Non-co-operation, passive resistance, Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha have been the phases of evolution of the former; on the contrary village reconstruction, a revival of the dead and dying industries and handicrafts of the nation, a spirit of co-operation amongst the communities and an ideal of service to fellowmen are the multiple aspects of the latter. While the programme of fight is a bilateral event, spasmodic in its outbreak and periodical in its timing, that of reconstruction is a process that is constant and sustained. The one calls itself into being all unawares like the cataclysms of nature. The other is a day-to-day pre-occupation of the nation which fosters the high spiritual qualities of love and service that really equip the nation for the fight. And that day will be a proud day in our annals when the States' people and the people of the Provinces march no longer as the rearguard and the vanguard, but march together abreast of each other to their victory and attain their destined goal of Poorna Swaraj "with equality as the base and liberty as the summit and fraternity as the cementing factor, in which all aptitudes have equal opportunities, all votes have equal rights, in which the 'ought' and the 'have' are balanced and in which enjoyment is proportioned to effort and gratification to

#### Resolutions—2nd. Day—10th. July 1936

The Conference concluded to-night after passing several resolutions. While favouring genuine All-India Federation, it was unable to accept the one proposed in the Government of India Act.

The Conference resolved to obtain recognition of the rights of the States' peoples to equal representation with the people in British India on the Constituent Assembly when formed and appealed to political organisations in British India to abandon a policy of non-interference with internal affairs of States and assert their rights to work for the establishment of democracy and self-government therein. It welcomed the formation of the Civil Liberties Union and urged the workers to bring to the notice of the Union cases of justifiable curtailment of civil liberties.

The attainment of responsible Government by legitimate and peaceful means for States as part of a free federated India was decided upon as its creed by the Conference.

Other resolutions protested against the happenings in certain States and demanded enquiry therein and also protested against the curtailment of rights of citizenship in certain other States. Condolence resolutions were adopted touching the deaths of Mrs. Kamala Nehru, Mr. M. V. Abhyankar, Mr. Ramohandra Rao and Mr. Abbas Tyabji.

Hindi or Hindustani was adopted as the official language for purpose of the Conference.

## The Punjab States' Council

The session of the Punjab States' Council was held at Lahore for four days commencing on the 6th. November 1936.

The length of the session which exceeded previous expectations explained the fact that many details came up for discussion and practically the whole field of federal questions had to be surveyed. The Council had before it primarily the report of its Committee appointed three months ago, at its Simla session, also the Hydari Committee's report and the proceedings of the recent Bombay Conference. It was understood that the unanimous recommendations of the Hydari Committee had been accepted by the Council, while on items whereon the Hydari Committee was unable to make completely unanimous recommendations, (these did not relate to major questions) the Council accepted the recommendations of its own committee with some amendments and alterations in the light of subsequent discussions on the subject.

The session was also utilised to explain and clarify individual difficulties of certain States with regard to some of the provisions so that Punjab States might be now in a position to place their view points in a clarified manner before the Viceroy's special representative when the latter visits them between the 15th of November and 15th of December.



# The Associated Chamber of Commerce

## Sir Edward Benthall's Address

*His Excellency the Viceroy* opened the proceedings of the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, on the 31st. December 1934, in the Hall of Bengal Chambers Calcutta. A large gathering of visitors and delegates was present. The Governor, *Sir John Anderson* attended the opening function along with the Members of the Cabinet, the Mayor of Calcutta and the Agent of the East Indian Railway.

Welcoming the Viceroy, *Sir Edward Benthall*, President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, who presided, said: "His Excellency has come to us at the time when a great constitutional experiment is afoot, after a series of anxious and turbulent years and when the stage is ripe for great constructive efforts in the economic sphere. His comprehensive leadership and his sincerity in tackling problems which face India to-day have been universally recognised and are only equalled by his prodigious capacity for work."

*Sir Edward* next reviewed some of the more important problems facing the business world to-day and specially mentioned that the year now concluding was memorable in the history of the Associated Chambers, because, during it, two of their constituents, namely, the Bombay and Madras Chambers of Commerce had celebrated their centenaries.

*Sir Edward* characterised the passage of the Indian Companies (Amendment) Act of 1936 as a landmark from their point of view. He said he could not pay too high a tribute to the Law Member for piloting through this measure—the most important piece of legislation to the business world since the Constitution Act.

He also welcomed the appointment of the Railway Enquiry Committee which the Associated Chambers were aware, was dealing with a very difficult problem, as well as the visit of agricultural experts. "In my opinion" he said, "the securing of the widest possible world markets for India's natural products, combined with the discriminating protection for her industries, is still the wisest policy for India. The subject is too large to go into on this occasion. But while in our public declaration of policy, we at times, naturally appear to be looking at matters solely from the commercial and industrial view-point, His Excellency may rest assured we do not in fact lose sight of the fundamental and predominate importance of agriculture and that in the general interest of the country as a whole, apart from any motives of self-interest, we shall always support to the full measures which we genuinely believe to be in the interest of agriculture."

Referring to the appeal made to the Associated Chambers by Lord Willingdon in 1934 to assist in the problem of unemployment among the educated middle-classes, *Sir Edward Benthall* said that it was receiving the closest attention from the Committee of the Chamber of this province in collaboration with the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and was equally to the fore in other provinces.

With regard to the imminent introduction of the new provincial constitution, *Sir E. Benthall* said: "While we cannot regard the general financial situation with any satisfaction, we believe that there can be no holding back now and that with prudent financial policies at the start there are fair prospects of the new Government of India Act achieving success. Our relation with all Departments of the Government have been cordial and we look forward to equally happy relation with the governments of the future. Whatever the future may hold, we wholeheartedly welcome the continued opportunity for doing something constructive for the country which has given so much to us."

*Sir Edward Benthall* also expressed pleasure at the presence for four successive years of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal and said that they realised with genuine regret that this was the last occasion on which he would be able to attend the meeting. "Speaking not only as a citizen of Bengal but from a wider aspect, I need only remark that His Excellency has more than earned our gratitude."

## H. E. The Viceroy's Address

The Viceroy replied as follows:

"Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I thank you very warmly for your cordial welcome. I greatly appreciate the honour you have done me in inviting me to open this meeting of a body so important as the Associated Chambers of Commerce of

India. The organizations which you represent have their roots deep in the economic history of this country. You have mentioned the fact that it is a century this year since the establishment of the Chamber of Commerce of Bombay and the Chamber of Commerce of Madras and you have reminded us that while the Bengal Chamber of Commerce dates in its present form from 1853, it can trace its origin to a period some twenty years earlier. The members of the bodies which you represent to-day have a long and honourable history of achievement. The work which they have done has been of incalculable service in the expansion and development of Indian commerce and industry while in the field of public service the commercial community has at all times given of its best.

"I have listened with real satisfaction to your president's observations upon the Indian Companies Act and to the well-merited tribute he has paid to Sir N. N. Sircar for the manner in which he piloted that complicated measure through the Assembly. I have been at some pains since I came to India to try to understand the special circumstance with which the Act seeks to deal and I venture to predict that the experience of its working will fully justify your opinion of its value.

"Your President has expressed your sympathy with the railways in their present difficult position. I can assure you that the railway administration throughout India welcome constructive criticism and any suggestions made for the improvement of their financial position will receive the most careful consideration. But I am told that during the difficult period through which we have been passing, railways have, in fact, received few, if any, helpful suggestions from the commercial community. This has been due, of course, not to any lack of goodwill or commonsense on the part of the critics of the Railways but to the very technical nature of the problems involved.

Though very large savings have been made on railways during the past few years, I know that the railway administration would be the last to claim that all possible economies have been effected. The many phases of railway operation are under constant examination with the object of further reducing costs. Railways are also fully alive to the urgent necessity of increasing efficiency and improving their services to meet the changing needs of traffic.

"I am afraid, however, that your President has not been quite fair to the railways when he speaks of the railways seeking a solution of their problem by the easy methods of raising freights. In truth there is no more difficult method and it is the last one to which railways wish to resort as they, equally with the commercial community, realise the importance of its reactions on trade. All the recent increases have been made after the most careful examination and it is believed that they will not impede the free movement of traffic. No one realises more than I do that cheap railway transport is necessary for industrial and agricultural development. The claim is often made by the commercial community that reduced rates will so stimulate traffic that the result will be increased earnings. Railways are always prepared to reduce rates, if by so doing, there is a reasonable chance of covering the cost of the reduction. But it must not be forgotten that a reduction of say 25 per cent in rates required an increase of 33 per cent in traffic, merely to obtain the same gross earnings and about 50 per cent increase to get the same net earnings. That is a highly significant fact which may not have been present in the minds of all those persons who have pressed for freight reduction as means of enhancing railway revenues. Indeed, I think that you as business men will agree with me that if the railways are to be run on commercial lines, those who manage them must be satisfied, before they embark upon a policy of large scale reductions in rates, that there is a reasonable chance of obtaining the necessary traffic to counter-balance the loss on account of the reduction on existing traffic.

"One word more before I leave this subject. You have referred in the remarks which you were good enough to address to me to the work of the Railway Enquiry Committee. The railways, let me say at once, are in entire agreement with your Chambers in extending a welcome to Sir Ralph Wedgwood and his colleagues. And you may rest assured that in the responsible task which he has set out to perform, he can rely on receiving the fullest co-operation from all railways. I am glad to think that as businessmen you share may view that the composition of the Railway Enquiry Committee is appropriate and that a body consisting of acknowledged experts is best qualified to find a solution of the very difficult questions with which the railway administration is faced at the present time. Sir Ralph Wedgwood occupies a commanding position in the railway world and I am confident that he and his colleagues with their recent experience of a depression worse even than that which we

have had to face in India will be able to contribute in no small degree to a satisfactory disposal of the difficulties which confront us.

I am glad to think that the agricultural experts to whose visit you have referred will have with them in the important and responsible work on which they are engaged your goodwill and your support. I am glad to notice amongst all sections of our population an ever-growing sense of the extent to which the prosperity of commerce and industry is conditioned in India by the prosperity of the countryside. The cultivator represents the bulk of the population of this country and the reaction on industry of his ability to purchase is immediate and inevitable. It is a comfort to me to know that a body so responsible and so important as the Associated Chambers of Commerce should be prepared, as you have informed me to-day, that they are prepared to support to the full measures, which you are satisfied, are calculated to be of value to the agriculturist, whatever the nature of those measures.

"In the remarks which you have made you have touched on the problem of unemployment and you have rightly emphasised that that is a problem which is one of the gravest and the most depressing of those which confront us to-day. Let me say at once with what interest I have listened to what you have told me of your approach to the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and how much importance I attach to a collaboration of this nature between the employer and those who are in a position to influence the potential employee. It is in the collaboration between educational authorities and institutions and prospective employers that in my view lies the best hope of working out effective schemes to deal with questions of critical importance and urgency. I am well aware of the difficulties and I am not without experience in my own country of the problem of unemployment and of its baneful and cruel effect on some of the best elements in the nation. The presidency of Bengal has distinguished itself by the active steps which it has taken to deal with the whole matter. Much has already been done and if much still remains to do, that is not as a result of any lack of co-operation or of any failure to realise and appreciate the gravity of the position on the part of the Local Government or on the part of those who are in a position in this presidency to lend their aid towards easing the strain. But when I address the Associated Chambers of Commerce, I speak to a wider audience and you gentlemen, who are here to-day represent the interests and firms spread all over India. I am confident that the several provinces to which you belong can look for the whole-hearted and active co-operation of the firms which you represent and of your Chambers of Commerce in giving any practical assistance to deal with unemployment and I feel sure that your anxiety to take all steps on your power to grapple with it and to reduce the number of those who are at the present time its victims is as great as is my own. I am indeed glad to think that your active support and your sympathy are already enlisted in this great cause. The problem which is worldwide in its incidence is a most difficult one, but the extent of the damage and suffering which it inflicts must serve to stimulate us to greater efforts in seeking means wherever possible to remove its cause or at least mitigate its severity.

"Discussions with representatives of the Japanese Government continue. I had hoped that it might have been responsible for me to indicate to you that agreement had been reached but that is not yet the case.

"I hear with particular pleasure of the good relations which have existed between the bodies which are represented here to-day and the various Departments of the Government and I welcome your expression of readiness to maintain the same cordial relations in the future and to play your part to the full in the new constitution. Commerce is and always will be an interest of the first importance. Its stake in the country is vast. The effect on unemployment, the effect on constitutional development of the attitude of the commercial community and of the handling by that community of the great business problems that confront it cannot be over-estimated. I would make one appeal to you in this connection and that is to do all that you can to spare the best men available to you to fill the seats which have been assigned to you in the new Legislatures. It is of vital importance that the business community to which substantial representation has been accorded and which stands for so much in the life of the country should be well represented and I would ask you to encourage younger men of the firms which compose your membership to interest themselves in the great political questions of to-day and in the constitutional developments which are taking place in India.

"All of us in India form part of a single system. Failure or success must depend on the co-operation of all of us and upon the giving by all of us of our very best

to the advancement and prosperity of the country. I do not over-estimate it when I say that there are few ways in which we can make a more enduring contribution and a contribution of greater value than by ensuring that the representatives whom you send to the Legislatures are men of balance, experience and judgment prepared to take a broad view of the problems which come before them and to familiarise themselves with the constitutional background and with the major problems of the day in sufficient detail to ensure that their judgment on the political issues that come up for consideration shall carry merited weight. You mentioned in the course of your remarks that the members of the Associated Chambers appreciate that the seats assigned to them in the Legislatures carry not only privileges but heavy obligations. That is a just appreciation of the position and I am glad to think that at a moment such as the present when the first stage of the new constitutional edifice by the introduction of the Federal scheme is not in my judgment remote, a body so important as that the representatives of which I now see before me, should be prepared to pledge itself to honour those obligations to the full.

"Mr. President, before I conclude I should like to say to the members of this Association how strong is my fellow feeling for them in the trials and anxieties and disappointments they have had to endure during the prolonged and severe depression through which the business community has passed since 1929 and to voice my earnest hope that the modest, but as I believe highly significant, improvement in trade and industry now evident may continue to gain momentum and may come in time to constitute a major and widespread revival of general prosperity. I am the more easily able to sympathise with your anxieties and to share your hopes and aspirations by reason of the fact that throughout the slump and indeed upto the moment of assuming my present charge, I was myself actively engaged in business. I have as well experienced something of war and also of public life and I say deliberately that I know of no sterner test of heart and head, of courage and capacity than that imposed by a period of rapidly shrinking values and contracting credits upon those who bear upon their shoulders the burden of management in finance, in industry or in commerce and the duty of wardenship over funds invested by the public.

"I am not going to indulge in any overconfident assurances of good times to come nor would you thank me if I were to venture any such thing. Indeed, there is much in the existing outlook that I do not relish. I do not like any more than you like the rise of what is called economic nationalism with the inevitable debasement of standards of living which must flow from its ruthless exercise and with the whole harmful apparatus by which it is prosecuted, designed for the purpose of inhibiting the international exchange of commodities, nor do I believe, for reasons some of which I touched upon in a recent speech to the Chelmsford Club, that this unfortunate tendency is likely soon to disappear again. It is not, I think, possible to regard with satisfaction such part of the revival of business as is founded in a widespread increase in the manufacture of warlike material; for quite apart from the hazard of war, there can be no doubt but that this is a kind of activity which, when it is undertaken on the scale appropriate to the present day requirements, must profoundly disturb the normal organisation of the trades most affected with the very real prospect that when the tide turns those important industries may find themselves precipitated into a period of enforced deflation with consequences profoundly prejudicial to business as a whole. But if these are some of the reasons for a cautious evaluation of those signs by which we are accustomed to measure the performance and the prospects of trade and industry, it is my belief that there are other signs which give us good ground for hope, of which by far the most material is that in many and diverse quarters there is to be seen substantial evidence that business everywhere is travelling with slowly gathering speed upon the upward curve of one of those major and cyclical movements of trade which impelled by forces still too little understood now rise like a mighty tide to penetrate even the remotest backwaters of commerce and then again, for reasons equally obscure after a due interval of time, subside to the deep from which they originate. If this indication of better times to come is indeed destined in the not remote future to fulfil its promises, I need not assure you how sincerely I trust that India may share in full measure in any general betterment that may emerge.

"I thank you again for the cordial welcome which you have given me to-day, am glad to think that on the occasion of this meeting I should be accompanied by His Excellency Sir John Anderson, who, throughout the period of his distinguished career as Governor, has shown so close and so informed an interest in the problems of the business community as indeed in everything of concern to this presidency. I

am sorry to think that as you have reminded us this will be the last occasion on which he will be present at the opening meeting of the Associated Chambers. Let me say again how greatly I appreciate the honour you have done me in inviting me to address you to-day. I offer my sincere good wishes for a successful outcome of your deliberations and for a prosperity during the coming year which will be of material benefit to India and to her peoples everywhere as well as to yourselves.

## Proceedings & Resolutions

### RESOLUTION OF LOYALTY

On the motion of the President, the following resolution was carried: "The Associated Chambers of Commerce dutifully offer their profound loyalty to His Majesty King George VI."

Mr. F. A. Birley, Deputy President of the Association, proposing a vote of thanks to the Viceroy, said that he looked upon His Excellency's attendance at the meeting as an earnest of the sympathy with which he was prepared to consider the many difficulties and problems with which commerce and industry were constantly faced. His insight into the very core of India's economic problems connoted by his policy of intensive care for agriculture was evidence of his genius for government.

### SUPER TAX AND INCOME TAX

The hon'ble Mr. O. G. Arthur (Bengal Chamber) moved the following resolution:—

"The Associated Chambers of Commerce note with regret the delay by the Government of India in fulfilling their pledge to remove the remaining surcharge upon income-tax and super-tax and expresses their anxiety at the continuance of levels of taxation both direct and indirect that have profoundly affected the whole financial economic structure of the country".

Mr. Arthur said that in deciding to put forward the resolution, the Committee of the Bengal Chamber was not unmindful of the grave difficulties that faced the Finance Member in framing the budget. They felt it necessary that they should again refer to the incidence of this tax, having regard to the very special emergency circumstances which originally necessitated its imposition. The country then was going through a severe depression and money had to be found to carry on the essential services of the country by such drastic steps as cuts in pay and by imposition of surcharge on a whole range of customs duties and income and super-tax. The Finance Member had publicly recognised the existence of this pledge and they all hoped that he would see his way to honour it in the next budget. Mr. Arthur added, "we believe Sir James Grigg himself is dissatisfied with the high level of taxation in this country both direct and indirect and if that assumption is correct, there can be no point in adding difficulties to the Finance Member's unenviable task."

The resolution, which was seconded by Mr. F. A. Birley (Madras) and supported by Mr. Halliwell (Bombay), was carried.

### EXEMPTION FROM DOUBLE INCOME TAX

Mr. J. Reid Kay (Bengal) moved a resolution urging the Government of India to extend to all holding companies the benefits of the exemption from double income-tax recently conferred upon the investment companies.

Mr. Reid Kay said that the Government, by a notification exempted from super-tax so much of income of any investment trust company which paid or would pay super-tax respecting profits out of which such dividends had been or would be paid. They still objected to the notification because it confined super-tax exemption to investment companies alone.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Halliwell (Bombay) and carried.

By another resolution, Mr. Birley (Madras) asked that arrangements with the Mysore State be brought into line with those applicable to other Indian States and that division of tax between the British India and the Indian States be carried out by the Government concerned. The resolution stated:

"This Association is of the opinion that the procedure at present adopted in granting relief from taxation borne on the same income in both British India and Mysore or other Indian States should be reviewed with a view to ensuring that no income ———r any circumstances bear tax twice in the hands of the as further, that machinery be introduced to relieve assesses in British India of the

necessity of making separate returns in each Indian State to which they export goods."

The resolution which was seconded by Mr. W. J. Younde (Bengal) and supported by Mr. Hallsall (Bombay) was carried.

#### REGISTRATION OF TRADE MARKS

Mr. A. K. G. Hogg (Bombay) moved the following resolution :—

"That in the opinion of this Association the Government of India should take steps without delay to enact legislation for the Registration of Trade Marks in India in such a manner as will give the registered user of any mark the right to immediate injunction preventing the use of such mark or any colourable imitation thereof by others subject only to proof of prior usage by the defendant in any dispute."

Mr. Hogg reminded the Government of India that the need for a Trade Marks Registration Act was to-day more urgent than ever. All they were asking for was power to register. They did not urge that registration would become compulsory either directly or by implication.

Mr. H. Foreman (Upper India), seconding, said that all Chambers would support the resolution.

Supporting the resolution, Mr. J. A. Edward Evans (Bengal) said that rapid industrial development coupled with phenomenal increase of imports from the Far East had brought out the necessity for protection to manufacturers and merchants of trade marks which they had established and for which they had created a steady demand. The legislation would be a safeguard for owners of old trade marks as well as to introducers of new ones. The resolution was carried.

#### STANDARDISATION OF WEIGHT AND MEASURES

Professor W. Roberts (Northern India) moved a resolution urging the Government of India to introduce legislation with the object of fixing uniform standards of weights and measures throughout India.

Prof. Roberts said that a committee was appointed in 1913-14 which produced a comprehensive report. It was suggested that the Government of India should by legislation lay down all-India standards to be adopted by Provincial Governments. Such legislation should be of permissive nature, leaving it for the provinces to adopt them wholly or in part to suit local needs.

Mr. J. S. Ryan (Upper India) seconding, said that the systems of weights and measures throughout India were in confusion. Any legislation on the subject would permit a reasonable person for bringing the changes necessary for universality into effect but unless the change was under an all-India law, it would never come.

Ras Bahadur P. Mukherjee (Punjab), supporting, said that there was strong feeling in Northern India that there should be uniformity of standardisation of weights and measures for assisting the sale of agricultural products.

Mr. Hallsall (Bombay) said that not only would standardisation greatly facilitate inter-provincial and foreign trade but also the preparation of reliable statistics of agricultural and industrial products which was so important in the national economy of the country.

Mr. J. H. S. Richardson (Bengal) agreed with Mr. Hallsall's view and supported the resolution.

Mr. Birley (Madras), supporting the resolution, drew attention to the different standards of weights and measures in the various parts of the Madras Presidency.

Sir Edward Benthall, President, remarked that where Emperor Akbar had failed Lord Linlithgow would succeed. This was an old subject and the remarkable enthusiasm shown would remove great many obstacles. The resolution was carried.

#### MARINE INSURANCE POLICY

Mr. Hallsall next moved the following resolution :—

"This Association urges upon the Government of India the necessity of enacting without delay legislation in British India embodying the provisions of the Marine Insurance Act 6, Edw. VII 1908, and of amending Sections 6 and 135 of the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, so far as they conflict with Sections 20 and 79 of that Act which provide for the assignment of Marine policies either before or after loss and for the right of subrogation respectively.

Mr. Hallsall pointed out the difficulty in proving the validity of assignment of marine policy. Another difficulty was that assignment did not carry with it the

mere right of suit. The contract of marine insurance made and to be performed in India was not a negotiable instrument for the assignment of policy and did not necessarily pass to the assignee the rights of the assignor. As for the right of subrogation, it was a matter which affected all insurance companies. The law in India was that where the insurer had indemnified the insured, he was subrogated to all rights of the insured in and in respect of subject matter insured, as from the date of the casualty causing the loss. Mere subrogation did not entitle the insurer to sue in his own name as Section 6 of the Transfer of Property Act provided, *inter alia* that the mere right to sue could not be transferred.

Mr. Bateman (Bengal) seconded the resolution.

Mr. F. Birley (Madras) asked certain questions which were replied to by Mr. Halsall (Bombay). Mr. Birley, agreeing, supported the resolution which was carried.

#### PROTECTION TO INDIAN HEAVY INDUSTRIES

Mr. P. F. S. Warren (Bengal) moved a resolution regarding the threat to Indian industries. The resolution stated :

"That this Association, having regard to the rapidly growing importance of the heavy engineering industry in India to the economic welfare of the country, views with concern the uneconomic competition to which it is subjected by the import of steelwork, rolling stock, machinery and other manufactured products at subsidised or dumping prices, which even in those cases where protective duties are in force on occasion entirely nullify the protection intended; and urges upon the Government to take steps to mitigate the crippling effect of this form of competition on the industry by every means in its power, and particularly by allowing a greater preference under the Stores Purchase Rules to goods of Indian manufacture in cases where the general price level shows such competition to exist."

Mr. Warren said that as Chairman of the Indian Engineering Association, the heavy engineering industry of India was not of artificial growth grafted on to the economic tree of the country but the natural outcome of the development of India's unrivalled resources as producer of iron and steel. The object of any scheme of protection accorded to the nascent industry was to give it an opportunity to develop sufficient strength to enable it to withstand foreign competition without continued help of such protection. There were now encouraging signs that trade was improving and the prices affecting the heavy engineering industry were regaining a reasonable measure of stability, but cases occurred where certain foreign competitors quoted prices in Indian markets wherewith the industry in India could not compete on any terms, prices which were so much below the general level as to make it clear that they must be the result of some form of subsidy or dumping. The resolution, therefore, put forward an alternative recommendation which would go a long way towards meeting these specific cases.

Mr. H. A. Bateman (Bengal) seconded the resolution.

Mr. Birley (Madras) pointed out that a couple of years ago tariff of 10 per cent was imposed on machinery which was formerly imported free but it reacted very unfavourably on most industrial firms. This resolution was rather moving towards increase of duty on machinery and other engineering products because if it was necessary to protect the heavy Indian industry, the only effect of guarding protection would be to increase the tariff rate. During the course of ten or fifteen years, there was a good deal of dumping, particularly from Germany and Japan and the heavy Indian engineering industry had been penalised.

Mr. L. A. Halsall (Bombay) said that he could not support the resolution as it stood. He agreed with Mr. Birley but pointed out that the principle embodied in the second part of the resolution was not desirable. He therefore moved an amendment that in the place of 'rolling stock' the word 'railway requirements' be substituted and the words 'dumping and crippling' be deleted and that the words commencing from 'by every means, etc.' down to 'exist' be deleted.

Mr. W. K. M. Langley (Cochin) said that it seemed to him that the resolution provided for the increase of duties rather than discrimination of reduction. He supported the amendment moved by Mr. Halsall and agreed with the remarks made by Mr. Birley (Madras).

Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee (Punjab) supported Mr. Halsall. The President suggested that the word 'compensating' be added after the word 'subsidised' and that he agreed with the remaining portion of the resolution as amended by Mr. Halsall.

Mr. Halsall agreeing with the President accepted the alteration and the resolution as amended was carried.

#### ‘INDIAN COMPANIES ACT

At this stage, Sir *Edward Benthall* left the presidential chair and Mr. Bixley, Deputy President, presided. The meeting then took up for consideration the following resolution on the Indian Companies Act:—

“While welcoming the Indian Companies (amendment) Act, 1936 as a whole as a reasonable and desirable measure of reform, this Association considers that, in the light of further examination of the Act as it passed the Legislature and of practical experience in giving effect to its provisions, certain points require the early attention of the Government of India with a view to the passage of a further short amending Act at the earlier opportunity:—

Section 17 (2)—Regulation 56 of Table “A” and Section 79 (1) (c)—This Association considers that Regulation 56 of Table “A” which must now, by Section 17 (2) of the Act, form part of the Articles of Association of every Company and is unalterable, appears to be repugnant to Section 79 (1) (c) of the Act, as amended, and that an early amendment by way of clarification is desirable.

Section 17 (3)—Regulation 78 of Table “A” and Sections (2) and 871—Whereas Regulation 78 of Table “A” must now by Section 17 (3) of the Act, form part of the Articles of Association of every Public Company and every Private Company which is a subsidiary of a Public Company and is unalterable; and whereas such Regulation requires the retirement of all the Directors at the first ordinary meeting and thereafter one-third of the Directors each year, this Association considers that Regulation 78 of Table “A” is repugnant to Sections 83-B (3) and 871 of the Act, as amended, and should be altered to make it clear that Directors appointed otherwise than by the Company in General Meeting are not liable to retirement by rotation.

Section 105 (c)—The Association considers that Section 105 (c), as introduced into the Act, will hamper if not altogether prevent the acquisition of new properties in exchange for shares, probably interfere with conversion rights and prove seriously restrictive in other ways to business development, and strongly urges that the section should be deleted.

Section 277 (3).—Whereas Section 277 (3) of the Indian Companies Act as amended provides that companies established outside British India must in addition to their balance sheet file with the Registrar certain information as required by Form “H” in the Third Schedule; and whereas by the Note to that form the particulars required by Section 132-A providing that the Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Account and Auditors’ Report of Subsidiary Companies must be annexed to the Balance Sheet of the Holding Company; and whereas the Companies Act 1929 does not require the Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Account and Auditors’ Report of a Subsidiary Company to be annexed to the Balance Sheet of the Holding Company, this Association urges the Government of India that Form “H” should be altered either under Section 151 (3) or by an amending Act, so as to provide that Holding Companies registered outside British India will sufficiently comply with the requirements of Section 277 (Form “H”) if they annex to their Balance Sheet a duly authenticated statement as provided by Section 132-A of the Act, as amended, and also by the Companies Act, 1929 showing how the profits and losses of the subsidiary Company have been dealt with in the accounts of the Holding Company.

Section 91-A(3).—This Association considers that Sub-section (3) of Section 91-A of the Indian Companies Act 1913 as introduced by Section 46 of the Indian Companies (Amendment) Act, 1936 is contrary to the principle of secrecy which is essential to the proper conduct of business of any company and recommends to the Government of India that early steps be taken to delete sub-section (3) and so prevent the ill-consequences that must necessarily ensue from such a provision.

Sir Edward Benthall moved the first part of the resolution on the Indian Companies Amendment Act, commencing from the words ‘While welcoming’ etc., down to ‘opportunity’. He said that the object of moving the resolution in its present form was two-fold, (1) to record the general approval of the Act as passed and (2) to give an opportunity for general discussion before passing on individual items which they wished to review. With regard to the first, he had already publicly expressed his own opinion which he found generally shared by all those concerned after the passing of the Act that the Law Member to the Government of India gave them a



very fair deal. The present resolution merely recorded that in their opinion the Act was a reasonable and a desirable measure of reform. It was a positive statement and not merely a reluctant acceptance of the inevitable. They should carry out the Act in the spirit wherein it was intended, just as they had agreed to sketch the practices which were questioned by the public or were open to abuse by the people who were less jealous of the Act. He believed that this was the only sound course to preserve the system with which they themselves were concerned. As regards the second part relating to the amending of the Act, it might seem asking a lot of the Government to bringing such an Act so soon after the passing of the present Act, but the Government would recognise that the Act was hurried through in its latest stages. The Act, on the whole, he said, was dealt with on a non-party basis and that the resolution was a credit to the Legislature.

Mr. Halsall (Bombay) seconded and Mr. J. D. Ryan (Upper India) supported the resolution, which was carried.

Mr. Hodge (Bengal) moved the second part of the resolution commencing from 'Section 17 (E) to the word desirable'.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. L. A. Halsall (Bombay) and was carried.

Mr. Hodge moved the third part of the resolution commencing from 'Section 17 (E)—regulation (F), etc., to by rotation'.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. W. K. M. Langley and was carried.

Col. C. G. Arthur (Bengal) moved the last part of the resolution from the word commencing 'Section 91 (3) the Association', etc., to provision'.

He said that Sub-Section B (3) of Clause 46 of the Indian Companies Act of 1936 was one of the most objectionable features of the 1936 Act. He opined that this new Sub-Section might have the most serious consequences not only on individual companies but also on the whole future development of the Indian industry. He pointed out that there was a secrecy clause in the agreement of most assistants and in the event of assistants contravening such clause, he was liable to instant dismissal. The proposed new Sub-Section which they took great exception made it possible for business rivals to have easy access to the companies' trade secrets. It was not unfair, he said, to claim that the Managing Agents and directorate was just as much entitled to protection from the shareholder who was out for his own interest as the shareholder was entitled to protection from the directorate or Managing Agents. That this protection was necessary there should be no question. For the purpose of the new Act, he concluded, was to safeguard the public interest and his intention would be destroyed if the management and the company as a whole was not in turn protected. They had considered it, he added, advisable to have the proposed resolution in the belief that it would be unanimously supported by all members and he hoped that with his body of commercial opinion in favour of deletion of the clause, the Law Member might be finally persuaded to act in the matter.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Halsall (Bombay) and supported by Mr. J. G. Ryan (Upper India) and Rai Bahadur P. Mukherji (Punjab) and was carried. The meeting then adjourned.

### Resolutions—2nd. Day—Calcutta—22nd. Dec. '36

#### AIR MAIL SERVICE

Mr. Halsall (Bombay) moved to-day the following resolution relating to air mail services :

"That this Association urges on Government the early acceptance of the proposals for what is known as the Empire Air Mail Scheme which provides that all first class letter mail between Empire countries shall be carried by air ; that there shall be five accelerated services a week in each direction between India and England ; and that all first class letter mail shall be carried between Empire countries without surcharge.

"That this Association also urges on Government the necessity of making arrangements to ensure that the benefits of the Empire Air Mail Scheme be extended to centres in India not on the through trunk but served by internal feeder services and that mails to or from such centres be carried by air in India without extra cost to the public".

Mr. Halsall reviewed the history of the air mail pointing out how from the main route to India, internal feeder services had been established to allow rapid distribution of air mail to important centres in the country. The decision of the British Govern-

ment to carry all first class mail by air within the Empire without special charge was a step of equal importance.

Mr. Halsall said that the British Government had now made proposals for an Empire Air Mail Scheme. It had been planned that from the beginning of 1938, five services in each direction should be operated between England and India. The schedule would provide for the journey between India and England within a period of three days as against the present time of five and half days. The scheme would, therefore, provide facilities for the rapid exchange of ideas between India and Europe.

But, if the benefit of this scheme was properly to be realised in India, Mr. Halsall said, the internal air services should be enabled to operate with frequency equal to the main services and to carry without extra cost to the public for distribution throughout India the mails destined for and originating from the cities they served. He understood that the terms and conditions of the British Government for the establishment of Empire air mail services to be operated by the Imperial Airways to and through India were still under consideration by the Government of India. But no announcement had been made to assure the public that the benefits offered by the main air services would be fully developed by distribution of equal frequency by Indian Services. This was a matter of importance to all concerned especially to Ahmedabad, Bombay Madras and South India. It was therefore essential that arrangements for distribution of equal frequency on the part of the Indian air services should be made when the British scheme was put into operation.

It was essential also that the postal authorities in India should adopt a uniform postage rate for carriage of mail by air wherever services existed and that there should be no surcharge for the carriage by air in India by existing air services of mail accepted for carriage of the main air route.

The Bengal Chamber supported the resolution, subject to its being understood that were it more expensive to dispatch letters by air than by sea, then the option should remain with the despatcher as to which route he used.

General discussion followed and it transpired that the Empire air mail service was generally welcomed. It was not clear to many delegates to whether mails from India would be carried without surcharge as was the proposal for mails from the United Kingdom. Some delegates voiced fear if it was the intention that mails were to be carried by air from India without surcharge. It might be necessary in order to achieve this for India to contribute a heavy subsidy.

The meeting agreed to the resolution being withdrawn until further information was available as to the postage rates to be charged from India and as to the proportion of the cost of the scheme which might be borne by the Indian exchequer.

The same consideration applied *mutatis mutandis* to internal feeder services. The resolution was withdrawn.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. A. O. Brown (Bengal) moved a resolution regarding communications, which ran as follows :—

"That the creation of a department of Communications in the Central Government be expedited, such department to include Railways, Roads, Civil Aviation and Posts and Telegraphs but to exclude Inland Water Transport and Coastal Shipping which should be included in the portfolio of the Member of Commerce".

Mr. Brown remarked that it was to be hoped subsequent development might bring the railway in closer touch with commercial tracts and would gradually educate them out of what appeared to be their present policy of increasing the gross tonnage carrying at the expense of other forms of transport and the expense of the great ports of India without regard to the financial losses which they suffered by quotation of uneconomic rates of freight. The Government of India accepted the principle of bringing communications under one portfolio, but when the original resolution was proposed, it was urged that inland water transport and coastal shipping should be included in the portfolio of the Members of Commerce. The proposer held that it was an undesirable arrangement that the interests of shipping and inland water transport be in the same portfolio as Railways.

Mr. U. N. Sen (Punjab) supporting, said that the Punjab Chamber strongly urged that for any new scheme that might be evolved for the unification of the Transport Department, no further expenditure be incurred and the new department be not loaded with heavy personnel. Secondly, the Punjab Chamber had urged that inland

water transport and coastal shipping be included. It was feared that if inland water transport was excluded, there would be no well-defined policy of co-ordination. Mr. Sen asked the Chamber to urge the Government that the Ministry of Communications be inaugurated with the introduction of Provincial Autonomy and not wait till Federation came into being.

Mr. R. D. Fraser (Burma), supporting, said that the Burma Chamber had pointed out in 1934 that the position of inland water transport in Burma was somewhat different from that in Bengal and it was considered doubtful whether the inland water transport of Burma would benefit by being excluded from the purview of responsibility of the Minister charged with co-ordination of all form of transport. Favouring the resolution, he hoped that this would not be taken as a precedent when the distribution of portfolios came to be made in Burma after separation. The resolution was carried.

#### SALT INDUSTRY

The resolution of Rai Bahadur *Upendralal Das* (Chittagong) relating to the salt import duty was carried by a majority, Bombay, Burma and Madras, not voting. The resolution stated :

"This Association is strongly opposed to the indefinite continuance of the privilege of preferential tariff which has been of beneficial effect to the Indian salt industry as a whole."

#### COMPANIES ACT

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal) moved a resolution relating to Section 105 (c) of the Indian Companies Act 1936.

The resolution urged that "the Section should be amended so as to safeguard the rights of members of a Company to increase the capital of the Company by issue of further shares in such form and such manner as the Company at general meeting may determine."

Mr. Chapman-Mortimer said that the only effect of the section would be to prevent the manipulation of company finance to the detriment of some particular class of shareholders.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Halsehall (Bombay) and was carried.

On the motion of Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal) and seconded by Mr. L. C. Buss (Karachi) and supported by Mr. Birley (Madras) and Mr. L. A. Halsehall (Bombay) the resolution regarding section 277 (3) of the Companies Act was carried.

#### TELEGRAPH AND CABLE RATES

Mr. Birley (Madras) then moved the following resolution about telegram and cable communications :—

"This Association views with concern the proposals to unify code and plain language telegrams and to abolish deferred message rates which certain Governments intend to make at the International Telegraph Conference at Cairo in 1938 and strongly recommends the Government of India to oppose them."

"This Association urges the re-establishment of a four word minimum for messages and recommends that a new form of letter cablegram, to be charged for at a very low rate per 100 words, be introduced."

Mr. Birley said that their objection for proposed unification of code and plain language rates was based on the apprehension that the uniform rate to be chosen for these messages would be higher than the existing rate for code telegrams. They objected to the proposed abolition of deferred telegram, because they considered that this class of messages formed the intermediary between ordinary cables and air mail. Their two proposals were firstly reintroduction of 44 word minimum for code messages which they were assured, under-stimulate traffic and secondly, a new form of letter telegram should be introduced and charged at a very low rate by 100 words.

Mr. Hogg (Bombay), seconding, said that all big telegraph users were believed to have amended their codes to suit the five-letter code word with its relaxation of restrictions on the composition of the word. This manipulation of codes had been an expensive business. The resolution was carried.

#### SHORT-COMINGS OF POSTAL DEPT.

Mr. J. Reid-Kay moved the following resolution regarding the short-comings of the Posts and Telegraphs services :

"This association is of opinion that immediate steps should be taken towards effecting all round improvement in the services rendered to the public by the Posts and Telegraphs Department with particular reference to (1) prompt acceptance for despatch and delivery of telegrams, (2) more accurate service in the transmission of telegrams in order to prevent mutilations and (3) a speeding up of the services generally."

Mr. J. Reid-Kay recalled the outrage perpetrated on a Post Office servant in charge of the Serjeant's Mail by which he lost his life and referred to the conflagration in mail-van of the Imperial mail. He hoped that steps would be taken to prevent a recurrence of happenings. He pointed out that the system of telephoning the contents of telegram phonograms was working satisfactorily in the United Kingdom but he regretted that their experience of the system was not satisfactory.

The resolution was carried.

#### TELEPHONE EXTENSION

Prof. Roberts (Northern India) moved the following resolution relating to extension of the telephone system.

"That this Association is of opinion that in the development of the telephone system in India, it is essential that the necessity which exists for further extension of the telephone system in rural areas, be not overlooked."

Mr. Roberts expressed satisfaction at the progress made in this direction. He drew attention to the backward side of telephone development in rural areas. The amount of business in the centre should be the criterion and wherever trade existed telephone facilities should be available as trunkcalls alone would soon repay the expenditure involved.

The last line in the resolution was amended as follows: "Telephone system in rural areas where this is possible on remunerative basis be not overlooked". The amended resolution was carried.

#### TRADE STATISTICS

Mr. A. K. G. Hogg (Bombay) moved the following resolution on trade statistics:—

"Considering (1) the great importance to the business community in present day trading conditions of the prompt publication of full and reliable statistics, and (2) the vital necessity of such statistics as a sound basis for the shaping of commercial and industrial policy and for the conduct of trade negotiations with other countries, this Association urges the Government of India to undertake without delay the establishment of a Central Statistical Department on up-to-date lines."

Mr. Hogg said that the importance to the business community in present-day trading conditions of the prompt publication of full and reliable statistical information needed little emphasis. At a time when a planned economy was the order of the day in nearly all countries, India had no sound economists' figures on which to base her commercial and industrial relationships with other countries. The development of electric power resources and irrigation would be ineffect without statistics. The work of agricultural marketing officers and of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and the application of the results obtained through their agency would be nugatory unless subjected to statistical scrutiny. The new expansion of insurance, and of banking and building, all needed sound statistics to ensure proper planning.

It was notorious, Mr. Hogg said, that the official export trade figures did not tally with the corresponding figures of imports from India published by European countries. This was due to the system of exports "for orders" and to the large inter-port trade of the United Kingdom on continental account. In some years the discrepancy had been large enough to convert a passive into an active balance. It was therefore necessary that the Government of India should publish the foreign Government figures as a corrective to their own. It was also necessary that India should have reliable and up-to-date information of the developments of her foreign trade with each particular country. Her present statistics, organised during a period when such figures were of little more than academic interest, were almost useless by reason of the great delay with which they were published and the fact that they took into account only ports of landing. An Indian Central Statistics Bureau, with power to co-opt and if necessary pay for the services of experts in the different professions and trades would, he felt sure, be a happy solution of many problems.

The resolution was carried. The proceedings then concluded.

# The Calcutta Indian Chamber of Commerce

## H. K. The Viceroy's Address

His Excellency the Viceroy delivered the following speech in reply to an address from the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta on the 23rd. December 1936.

Gentlemen, I thank you warmly on behalf of Lady Linlithgow and myself for your welcome to us and for the good wishes which you have been so kind to express. As you have observed, the time at which I have assumed the heavy responsibilities of my present office is one when momentous changes are taking place in the political and economic life of India. I am well aware of the importance of those changes but I can at once assure you that in discharging the onerous duties that fall to me my first concern will at all times be that my action should be informed by a lively sympathy for India and for her best interests.

I heartily share your view as to the importance of improving the condition of the masses. To this subject I have myself devoted the closest personal attention since I assumed office last April. I would like to take this opportunity to say that in anything that I have been able to do to assist the cultivator to bring about an improvement in his conditions of livelihood and to stimulate interest in matters so important as the improvement of the breed of cattle and the problem of nutrition, I have received the utmost assistance from official and non-official agencies alike and from the press. The power of the press in matters such as these is great and I am glad to think that it has consistently been used to such good purpose and that in the efforts I have been making I have at all times had behind me its ready and prompt assistance. I agree with you that important as questions such as the improvement of the breeds of cattle and the problem of nutrition may be, they do not by themselves by any means exhaust the whole field of rural betterment nor indeed are the activities of the appropriated departments of Governments in this country in any way limited to those particular objectives vital though I hold them to be.

Thus I am in entire agreement with you in holding that the development of cottage industries is a direction in which further and valuable progress can be made but such study as I have been able to make of the experience in this field of other countries as well as of our own, convinces me that the rapid expansion of cottage industries can never be easy of achievement for the problems to be solved in connection therewith, particularly that of securing a profitable outlet for the products of such industries, are notoriously difficult of solution. Happily however there already exists in India a solid foundation on which to build and I am glad to observe in many quarters a determination to promote wherever practicable the establishment of cottage industries. It is only in the last few days that during my visit to the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition at Lucknow I have had an opportunity myself to visit a display which bears eloquent witness to the interest which has been taken in the matter in that important province.

The problem of unemployment is, as you are as well aware as I am, one the solution of which calls for the united endeavour of us all. The difficulties are great but I am glad to think that already some advance has been made and no one can fail to be impressed by the readiness, indeed the anxiety of all classes of the community, to assist. The presidency of Bengal has particularly distinguished itself by the initiative and the energy which it has displayed in dealing with this most important question. The development of small size industries is one valuable way by which we can assist in dealing with this problem and I am glad to think that that method of approach has been tried and, as I understand it, with marked success in this presidency.

You have dealt in some detail in your address with the progress of industrialisation and you have drawn attention to a fact which I, like you, agree in regarding as significant, the fact that the national income of India has been enhanced in a period of depression.

On the question of protection I would say only that I am, I think, right in holding the view that there is a growing recognition among Indian industrialists of the fact that protection, if sufficient discrimination is not exercised, may produce un-

fortunate effects and that it is unwise to overestimate the potentialities which it offers for the reduction of unemployment. You have suggested too that a vigorous and comprehensive national industrial policy is essential and you have been good enough to indicate that the impetus might well come from the centre. I will only say on that point that to the best of my judgment the policy of the central Government upon this highly important question has been entirely consistent and that in that in the provinces Ministers who both under the late Act and under the Government of India Act of 1935 have been and will continue to be directly concerned with it have, I think, I am right in saying, consistently shown a full realization of the importance of industrial development in all directions in which the differing conditions of individual provinces make development possible.

I observe with interest that the seat allotted in the Bengal Provincial Legislative Assembly to your chamber has already been filled and I feel no doubt that the representative of a body with experience and knowledge such as are at your disposal can be relied on to play an effective part in any discussions which may take place in the provincial Assembly as effecting the industrial development and improvement in Bengal.

In the remarks you have addressed to me you have stressed the importance of cooperation between Government and the people. I wholly share your view on that point and I regard it as of the first importance that cooperation should be of the closest. I am confident that you will at all times find on the part of officials of the Government of India or of the provincial Governments, an entire readiness to consider with sympathy practicable propositions which may be laid before them for dealing with the many important matters to which you have referred and if results of value are to be obtained the friendly assistance, the interest and the cooperation of non-official character are essential. I know to what an extent these have on so many occasions been forthcoming but it is, I think, not inappropriate to the occasion of your remarks to say again how great an importance I attach to these considerations and how sincerely I hope that in the interests of progress of provincial development and of the solution of problems so fundamental as the problem of unemployment, it will continue to be afforded indeed in a fuller measure than that in the past. Without the ready cooperation of non-official elements the best results can hardly be looked for. Such cooperation is consistent with honest difference of opinion on many major issues and indeed if in India we are to make a success of popular government it is very necessary that we should learn rather to concentrate upon points of agreement than to overstress the significance of matters on which some difference of opinion may have emerged. But as I endeavoured to make clear in the address which I broadcast on assuming my present office, even if occasions arise on which I do not find myself able to agree in all matters with those whose affairs I am concerned, I am prepared at all times to accept the sincerity and goodwill of those with whom I differ and I feel little doubt that this is equally true of the whole machine of government.

I am sorry that you should be dissatisfied with the attitude of my Government in regard to currency policy and to the composition of the Railway Enquiry Committee. Here again I fully recognise that currency policy is a matter on which different views may be held by different people and with honest conviction on both sides but it is also a question as to which it is well that the public in this country and the business community in particular should be fully seized of the policy and intentions of Government. As I recently indicated in reply to the Madras Currency League the position is that in our considered view there is no case for reopening the question of the rupee ratio ; and furthermore it is my duty to tell you with the utmost plainness that there is not the least likelihood of that view being modified.

As for the composition of the Railway Enquiry Committee, I have been concerned above all to secure a body of acknowledged experts and of outstanding ability who could be relied upon to examine with entire detachment the important and for the most part highly technical problems presented by the railway system of this country and to advise in the light of their great experience of similar difficulties in other countries as to the remedial action which might most appropriately be taken. The committee will, I am sure, be more than grateful for any views which may be laid before them by traders or others and for any expressions of opinion or for any suggestions which the commercial community of this country, or which a body so important as that which I now see before me may care to communicate and I am confident equally from my own knowledge of the high capacity and the great ex-

perience of the members of the committee that any such proposals or suggestions will receive the most careful and sympathetic consideration.

Gentlemen, I thank you again for your address. It has been a pleasure to me to meet you here to-day and I am grateful to you for the cordial welcome which you have extended to me. We may not always see eye to eye on all questions and our difference of view may extend to matters of importance but we are, I feel no doubt, at one in aiming at securing that in the decisions which we take in the policy we advocate the interests as we see them of India and of her citizens shall be the paramount and decisive consideration.

## The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce

### H. E. The Viceroy's Address

His Excellency the Viceroy, in reply to an address presented by the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, on the 22nd. December 1936, observed :

I am well aware of the long record of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce. I appreciate the extent to which it represents Bengal commercial interests and I am glad to have this opportunity to hear the views of so responsible a body on the many important matters to which you have referred in your address.

I welcome in particular your full appreciation of the importance of agriculture in the Indian scheme of things and the desirability of taking all possible steps to ameliorate in every manner that may be practicable the position of the cultivator. My investigations during the period of the Royal Commission on Agriculture to my work on which you have so kindly referred leave me in no doubt as to the magnitude of the problem and of the difficulties, but I am confident that with the willing co-operation which has so far been accorded to me by officials and non-officials alike it will be possible to make a marked advance and in the next few years materially to improve the present state of things. Improvement inevitably takes time; we are dealing not with a small country but with a vast subcontinent: the numbers affected run into tens of millions and it goes without saying that under such conditions the pace of the results must necessarily be slower than we could wish. But you may be confident that I am personally concerned to ensure that no delay which is avoidable will occur in taking all practical steps in the direction to which you have referred. I am very conscious of the importance of the specific aspects of the problem of rural uplift which you have mentioned in your address— aspects which need only to be stated for the difficulty of time factor to be realised.

You rightly state that the responsibilities which will be handed over to elected Ministers under the new constitution will be very great indeed, and I am glad to see on all sides a realisation now of the fundamental nature of the change which has been introduced under the new Act and of the real transfer of control and of responsibility to popular elected Ministers which it involves. Heavy as the task is its very burden will be the test of the capacity of those to whom it has been transferred. But my own familiarity with the provinces of this great country and the men whom they had been able to produce leaves me in no doubt that they will be able to provide alike Ministers and representatives in the new provincial Legislatures who can be relied on to spare no effort in the cause of India and of their own province and to approach the great problems which will fall upon them with a singlehearted devotion to the interests of their country. I am well aware of the difficulties with which their new responsibilities may confront them, but these are difficulties which confront Ministers in every country in the world today. There is no country today which has a surplus of revenue open to expenditure; there is no country in which the problem of unemployment is not great and serious; there is no country which does not have to face all the difficulties which arise from poverty, from underfeeding and from lack of marketable foodstuffs at prices within the capacity of the poorest in the land. These are the conditions which responsible Ministers have to face the world over and I am confident that Ministers will be found in India no less well able to grapple with them than elsewhere.

# Review of the Trade of India 1935-36

## Official Review of Steady

"Till the spring of 1935, the instability of currencies was a serious hindrance to the revival of trade, though its effects were felt less widely in countries the currencies of which had either been devalued or had left gold. Since then, there has been a large measure of actual stability in exchanges and the forces of recovery have gathered momentum", states the Review of the Trade of India in 1935-36.

To a certain extent, the review adds, the improvement during the year was due to re-armament, but more largely the recovery was based on a genuine improvement in conditions, there being distinct signs of improvement in economic conditions in most countries. For the first time since 1929, the gold value of world trade in 1935 registered a small rise of 1.9 per cent. The quantum of world trade rose by about 4.5 per cent to 82 per cent of the 1929 level, although it is significant that the gold value of Europe's trade declined by 3 per cent. There was little progress made in the year in the mitigation of the trade restrictions in force in European countries, for, while in a few countries like Austria and Belgium some of the restrictive measures were withdrawn, new restrictions were imposed in others or the existing restrictions intensified.

The international political situation during the year was distinctly worse than in 1934-35, and though, in consequence, the tendency towards economic inefficiency received added strength, the course of recovery was not greatly affected as the improvement in conditions generally proceeded on national lines depending more on the home than on the foreign market. The expansion of international trade consequently lagged behind the recovery in domestic conditions.

Agricultural prices, on the whole made distinct recovery. Prices of rice were firmly held in spite of a diminished overseas demand. Jute was on a much higher level owing to the smaller crop output. Cotton prices during the year under review were also maintained well on the whole. The improved world demand for oils and fats was reflected in the higher price-level of most oilseeds. The prices of groundnuts, castor seed and rape-seed all improved. Linseed prices made a distinct recovery in the last two quarters of the year. Tea, in its third year of restriction, made a moderate recovery in prices. Wheat prices also were better than in the preceding year. The price level of rubber also was satisfactory but the coffee market continued depressed.

## INDUSTRIES IN INDIA

Turning to industrial conditions, the review says that while there was improvement in several directions, there was deterioration in others. The cotton textile industry broke its previous record of production, but both external and internal competition were severe, and in spite of prices being marked down, large stocks remained in hand at the end of the year. The voluntary scheme of restriction of production in the jute industry broke down in the year under report and the prices of jute manufacturers declined. Larger overseas demand, however, absorbed the increased production of the year, a testimony to the general improvement in trade and industrial conditions. The iron and steel industry increased its output and sales. The production of cement also increased and negotiations were in progress during the year for the unification and control of the industry on its marketing side. Sugar production reached a new record and the Indian sugar industry is approaching a stage when it will be able to meet the entire internal demand. The problem before the sugar industry is now one of orderly marketing and the avoidance of wasteful competition. There was larger production of matches, paper, wheat flour, heavy chemicals and petrol, but there was a small decline in the production of kerosene oil. In the mining industry, coal did not show much improvement, but the demand for mineral ores showed a large improvement. Non-speculative industrial securities generally showed a small appreciation, but speculative industrial securities were on the down grade, jute and cotton shares, in particular, showing a dull record. The gross customs revenue realized in 1935-36 was Rs. 56.3 crores, as compared with Rs. 54.4 crores in the preceding year.



Industrial disputes during 1935 were few and the number of workers involved and the loss in working days were the lowest in 15 years for which statistics are available. The strikes which accounted for the greatest loss in working days during the year occurred in the Keshoram Cotton Mills, Calcutta, in which about 5,000 workers were involved with a loss of 119,000 working days, and in the Ahmedabad Textile Mills which affected 23,000 workers and resulted in a loss of over 93,000 working days.

#### GOLD-EXPORT AND EXCHANGE

The rupee-sterling exchange remained steady throughout the year sustained by the continued export of gold. Fluctuations were few and the average rate for the year was 18-3-8½d. The exports of gold during the year amounted to 4,123,723 fine ozs. valued at Rs. 38.31 lakhs. Prices of gold during the year were on a higher level than in 1934-35. The total exports, however, declined. Money conditions during the year were exceptionally easy. The continued exports of gold enabled the market to receive large supplies of funds through sales of sterling to Government. Call money was quoted at one-fourth per cent in Bombay in September and the rate practically remained unchanged until December. In the first quarter of 1936 the rate generally was half per cent on November 28, the Reserve Bank of India rate was reduced from 3 and half per cent to 3 per cent at which it still remains. In August, the Government of India issued a medium-term rupee loan for Rs. 15 crores at 3 per cent and applications for loan amounted to nearly Rs. 30 crores. Treasury Bills issued to the public, which had amounted to Rs. 88.33 lakhs in 1934-35, totalled about 70.51 lakhs in 1935-36; the average yield per cent fell from 1.58 to 1.08. The gilt-edge market underwent some violent fluctuations during the year at the time of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis and the crises in the silver market in Bombay. The index number of the prices of 3 and half per cent Government of India paper stood at 95 in April, 1935. By July it had risen by 4 points, but there was a decline in the succeeding three months, 94 being reached in October. From November, prices again appreciated, and, in March, the index number stood at 103.

#### NEW JOINT STOCK COMPANIES

Of stock companies registered with an authorised capital of Rs. 5 lakhs or more during the year under review, six companies having among them an aggregate authorised capital of Rs. 53 lakhs, had, as their object, the manufacture of chemicals and allied products. Companies for iron and steel manufactures accounted for Rs. 15.75 lakhs, one company alone crores. Twenty-seven companies with a total authorised capital of Rs. 152.98 lakhs were floated for cotton manufactures. Thirteen companies, having between them an authorised capital of Rs. 120 lakhs, were floated for the purpose of producing cinema pictures.

#### COURSE OF PRICES

As regards wholesale prices, the review says that the price-level in India, as indicated by the Calcutta Wholesale Price Index Numbers, was generally higher during the year under report than in the preceding year. From 87 in March 1935, the index rose to 91 in May and remained at that level for the next two months. After a slight set-back in August and September, there was a rise to 93 in October, and this level was more or less maintained till December. Thereafter, there was a relapse and in March, 1936, the index stood at 91.

As compared with September, 1929, there was, in March, 1936, a fall in the case of exported articles of 38 per cent, while in case of imported articles, the fall was 30 per cent. Taking December, 1931, as the basis, there was, however, a rise in December, 1935, of 5 per cent in the case of exports while a fall of 12 per cent was recorded in the case of imports. In March, 1936, there was only a rise of 1 per cent in the case of exported articles, while the price level of imported articles fell by 15 per cent.

The prices of raw materials, specially jute, oilseeds and hides and skins, showed considerable improvement in the year under review. Both cotton and jute manufactures were during the greater part of the year on a lower level than in the previous year. In the case of metals, the decline in the trend of prices noticed in the latter half of the preceding year was checked in the year under review.

#### FOREIGN TRADE

The total value of the imports of private merchandise advanced from Rs. 1.28 crores in 1934-35 to 1.34 crores in the year under review, while exports, including

re-exports, advanced by Rs. 9 crores to 164 crores. The visible balance of trade in merchandise and treasure in 1935-36 was in favour of India to the extent of Rs. 67 crores, as compared with Rs. 76 crores in 1934-35. The transactions in treasure of private account resulted in a net export of treasure amounting to Rs. 26 and one third crores, as against Rs. 53 one half crores in the preceding year. Net exports of gold amounted to Rs 37 one third crores, while silver showed a net import of Rs 9 one fourth crores. Net exports of currency notes amounted to Rs. 26 lakhs.

#### IMPORTS

Among the important articles of import, cotton manufactures of all kinds showed a decline of Rs. 72 lakhs in value. Imports of cotton piecegoods declined by Rs. 1.15 lakhs; but the loss was partly made up by larger imports of cotton twist and yarn. The total quantity of piecegoods imported, however, actually increased from 944 million yards to 947 million yards. The most noticeable feature of the year's trade in cotton piecegoods was the striking advance made by Japan in all branches, notably in printed and grey goods. The share of the United Kingdom declined correspondingly. Not less striking was Japan's advance in the imports of cotton twist and yarn. The total quantity imported increased by 10 and a half million lbs. or 31 per cent to 44 and a half million lbs. and most of this increase was absorbed by Japan. There was a decline in the imports of artificial silk yarn, piecegoods of artificial silk mixed with other materials and woollen piecegoods. On the other hand, imports of artificial silk piecegoods showed a further improvement and the increase under this head in the last two years was sufficient to offset the decline in the imports of silk piecegoods and piecegoods of silk or artificial silk mixed with other materials. Imports of raw wool, raw silk and silk yarn were all maintained. Imports of all articles of artificial silk in the year under review were valued at Rs. 3.16 lakhs as against Rs. 3.59 lakhs in the preceding year. Raw silk and silk manufactures of all kinds declined by Rs. 59 lakhs to Rs. 2.76 lakhs, while raw wool and woollen manufactures had a total recorded value of Rs. 2.79 lakhs, which was 1.06 lakhs less than in 1934-35. In respect of all these articles, Japan continued to be the most important source of supply.

In the "Metals" group, there was a pronounced improvement in the imports of iron and steel materials. The total quantity imported rose by 32 per cent to 446,000 tons, the value of the imports rising by 13 per cent to Rs. 7.20 lakhs. All the important descriptions, except steel bars, showed noticeable improvement. The United Kingdom, which retained the largest share of the trade, lost some ground relatively to the competing countries. There was a noticeable advance in the imports from Germany. Imports from Japan, though relatively small, also made further headway. There was a general improvement in the imports of machinery and millwork, the total value improving by Rs. 1 crore. Imports of metals, other than iron or steel, of which a large portion consists of metals in the semi-manufactured state, showed in the aggregate some decline owing to smaller imports of mixed or yellow metal and copper sheets. Imports of motor cars, which had shown a marked increase in 1934-35, showed a fall in the year under review. The total number imported in 1935-36 was 13,590 as against 14,434 in the preceding year. A similar falling off in demand was noticed in the case of motor omnibuses and lorries. Wireless instruments and apparatus showed a large improvement. Under the "Mineral Oils", while imports of kerosene declined, those of fuel oils and petroleum improved. Imports of cigarettes and cigars showed small increases, but those of unmanufactured tobacco and tobacco for pipes and cigarettes declined.

#### TRADE OR EXPORTS

On the export side, there was some decline in the demand for Indian cotton, the shipments during the year totalling 3,307,000 bales with a recorded value of Rs. 53.77 lakhs, the fall as compared with the preceding year being 93,000 bales in quantity and Rs. 1.18 lakhs in value. The shrinkage in exports was primarily due to lesser demand from Japan which took 1,789,000 bales, or 2,05,000 bales less than in 1934-35. The larger use of Indian cotton in Lancashire was reflected in the increased off-take of the United Kingdom. In 1935-36, the U. K. took 456,186 bales, which was 109,000 bales more than in 1934-35. The average declared value per ton of cotton exported in 1935-36 was Rs. 586-12-4 as against Rs. 500-12-11 in 1934-35. Exports of Indian piecegoods except, while foreign demand for raw jute continued to increase or totalled 771,000 tons, an increase of 22,000 tons, as

compared with 1934-35 and of 23,000 tons as compared with 1933-34. Owing mainly to restriction on the 1935 crop, much higher prices were realized, the average declared value of the exports in 1935-36 being Rs. 177-11-5 per ton as compared with Rs. 144-7-6 in 1934-35. The quantity of tea exported declined from 325 million lbs. to 312 and a half million lbs. as a result of reduced export allotment. The recorded value of exports in 1935-36 was Rs. 19.8 crores as compared with Rs. 20.1 crores in 1934-35. Exports of food grains and flour showed a decline. The total value recorded under this group, however, rose from 11.84 lakhs to 12.41 lakhs owing to the higher price of rice. Exports of metals and ores showed a striking improvement. Raw wool also had a better market. Exports of castor seed declined in quantity while the recorded value showed an increase. The trade in hides and skins showed better results in spite of a decline in the demand for tanned goat skins.

The volume of exports, as compared with 1927-28, was at its lowest in 1933-33, while that of imports showed the greatest decline in 1931-32. Since then both imports and exports have recovered, but while in the case of exports there has been a continuous improvement from 1933-34, imports, which made an earlier recovery, declined sharply in volume in 1933-34. In the last two years both imports and exports have advanced and the volume of exports is now about 13 per cent less than the pre-depression level of 1927-28, while the volume of imports is about 13 per cent less. As compared with 1932-33, exports have recovered by 18 per cent ; imports have improved by 23 per cent from the 1931-32 level.

Since 1933-34, export prices have shown a relative improvement, while downward trend of import prices continues. The price-levels of exported and imported articles are thus adjusting themselves more closely. This feature is due to the increase in the price of foodstuffs and raw materials, which may be regarded as one of the most conspicuous feature of the general recovery. To a certain extent, control of production was also responsible for raising the prices of raw materials. In the case of manufactures, industrial equipment has been greatly improved in recent years—a useful feature in a period of depression—and manufacturing costs have been brought down. This, combined with the keen trade competition in a restricted world-market, have tended to reduce the prices of manufactured articles. The barter terms of trade show that a definite improvement has occurred since 1933-33. Merchandise for merchandise, India is now getting only 8 per cent less of imports in exchange for her exports, as compared with 1927-28.

## Development of Industries in India

### A Review of Past Seven Years

The following are extracts from a press note issued by the department of Industries and Labour, Government of India in October 1936 :—

A review of the efforts that have been and are being made by Governments to stimulate the industries of India, the condition of which vitally affects the standard of living throughout the country, is published today. The review, which is one of a series of bulletins issued by the Industries and Labour department of the Government of India, takes the form of a report on 'State Action in Respect of Industries.' It covers seven years from 1923 to 1935.

In dealing with general industrial policy, the review points out that at the beginning of these eight years the central Government, though deprived of the responsibility for industrial development under the reformed constitution, had, broadly speaking, obtained through tariffs extensive powers for assisting the economic position of industries.

The provinces, on the other hand, had in theory almost unlimited powers to assist industries, but their financial resources, their technical equipment and the difficulty of dealing with industries of all-India importance on a provincial scale contributed to confine their activities largely to the less organized forms of industries.

Coming to the important question of the development of cottage industries, the review states regarding textiles :

The extent and importance of the handloom industry in India are not generally appreciated. The following figures taken from the report of the Cotton Textile Tariff

Board published in 1932 and the census tables of 1931 respectively give approximate estimates :

#### Handlooms

Workers engaged in cotton and silk weaving and spinning ...

No.  
1,984,950  
2,576,000

The consumption of cotton yarns by handloom weavers in the Presidency of Madras from April to October 1933 was about 42.7 million pounds, while the value of the annual production of the Benares weavers alone is estimated at Rs. 1 and one-fourth crores. Even in a smaller and less developed province like Assam, handlooms consume about 13 million pounds of yarns every year, which is woven into cloth valued at about Rs. 2 crores and aggregating in length about 27,000 miles. Brief indications are given of the way in which training and demonstration parties have succeeded in various provinces in assisting the industry.

The Government of India decided to spend about Rs. 5 lakhs every year for five years in developing the industry. Schemes were formulated and discussed at the sixth Industries Conference in July, 1934.

Commenting on these schemes, which provide for improvements in marketing, appointment of technical experts and supply of materials on cheap rates, the review states :

"The progress achieved in these schemes during the short period since their inception is encouraging. The necessary staff has been appointed in most of the provinces. The organizations through which it is proposed to carry on work have also been set up. In the United Provinces, 15 special investigators have been appointed, each in charge of two to four districts in order to carry out a preliminary survey of the whole industry in the province. In Madras, the necessary preliminary arrangements for the supply of raw materials have been concluded. In Bihar and Orissa, separate sections of a new organization, dealing with manufacturing, finishing and marketing have been set up, each in charge of a qualified technical assistant."

Similar action was taken by the Government of India with a view to assisting the silk industry in India, a grant of Rs. 1 lakh a year for five years from 1935-1940 being made. An Imperial Sericultural Committee was set up, and met in New Delhi in 1935, when schemes submitted by local Governments were scrutinised. All the approved schemes are now in operation and allotments have been made to Madras, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Burma.

More recently the Government has taken an important step to aid the cottage and small scale woollen industries by making a special grant of Rs. 5 lakhs to be spread over five years, and a Woollen Industry Committee has been set up to advise the Government of India on the question of allotments.

Substantial assistance has been given by the Indian Stores department by purchasing cottage industries' products, for example, cutlery, locks, stable gear, uniforms, crockery, postal bags, etc.

Attention has also been devoted by research workers in different provinces to button-making, bee-keeping, bangle-making, woollen blankets, soap-making, improved glass and pottery manufacture, and a host of other articles.

The evolution of services giving information about industry and trade generally and the provision of technical assistance has progressed rapidly and is becoming more and more valuable. Publications for the dissemination of commercial intelligence have become numerous, while useful surveys of different industries are being increasingly undertaken.

The period under review is remarkable for the successful efforts made by the Governments of Madras, the Punjab, and the United Provinces to develop the hydro-electric resources of the country. This has resulted in factories being set up to utilise local materials and the provision of cheap power to industrial consumers.

A chapter in the review deals with the question of financial assistance from the State for the development of industries and speaking of Madras, the conclusion reached is,—"There is thus no indication that industrial development in the province has been stimulated to any appreciable extent by the grant of State aid, either under the Act as it stood before amendment or after the introduction of the new concessions by amending Acts". Again, a scheme for the supply of textile appliances on the hire-purchase system proved disappointing. A summary is given of the results of loans made by other provincial Governments, which show that in some cases the hire-purchase system has worked satisfactorily.

Another important industrial activity of Government's has been the setting up of

pioneer factories. Among the manufactures pioneered in this way are soap, ink powders and paint. These factories are primarily for the purpose of training workers and proving that opportunities exist for private enterprise.

One of the most recent developments has been the establishment of the Industrial Research Bureau by the Government of India, which has already undertaken a heavy programme of work and is contributing valuable observations on industrial methods.

Two chapters are devoted to a picture of the various fiscal measures for the assistance of Indian industry. In this section of the review the most important items dealt with are iron and steel, cotton and other textiles, and sugar each of which is efficiently treated. Among other articles receiving protection are :—paper, salt, matches, wheat, silver thread and wire, silver plate and like manufactures, magnesium chloride. The removal of certain tariff anomalies on the recommendation of the Tariff Board also proved of great assistance to industry.

The review closes with a chapter on the general policy followed by Government of affording all possible encouragement to the development of industries in India by showing a definite preference in making purchases for articles of indigenous manufacture.

Departments of the Government of India, or officers specially authorised, may, when they are satisfied that such measure is justified, allow a limited degree of preference in respect of price to articles produced or manufactured in India either wholly or in part.

The department has also assisted Indian industries by persuading indentors to have recourse to indigenous sources of supply whenever it was found that products were obtainable of suitable quality at a competitive price in India.

Another useful activity, from the point of view of Indian industry, has been the organisation of an exhibition of Indian manufactures in the imperial secretariat buildings, New Delhi, for bringing prominently to the notice of intending authorities and the general public the standard of quality attained in certain industries. Manufacturers are showing an increasing interest in the exhibition, which includes a wide range of textile, engineering and miscellaneous stores, and is fairly representative of the various classes of indigenous articles purchased by the department for Governments.

As a result of the facilities offered by the Indian Stores department for the purchase of stores in India, the Government of Ceylon, Malaya and the Union of South Africa placed orders with Indian firms.

A similar policy has been followed by the Railway Board in the purchase of stores by and on behalf of railways. Price preferences have been allowed in favour of indigenous material and tenders for stores required by State-managed railways are invited under the rupee tender system.

Recently, revised rules were issued regulating the purchase of stationary and printing stores by departments under the Government of India. Indian mills are now supplying over 95 percent of the paper required by Government and can compete with foreign firms in the quality of the paper supplied.

Indian concerns have also, in consequence of Government encouragement, been able to supply over 75 per cent. of rag paper for permanent records, ivory finish paper, antique cream laid paper and envelopes, which used to be obtained wholly and abroad some years ago. The average values of purchases of Indian paper and of paper purchased through the Director-General, Indian Stores department, London, during the six years 1928-29 to 1933-35 were Rs. 42 lakhs and Rs. 1 lakh respectively per annum, and the value of the paper purchased through the London agency fell from Rs. 1,72,000 in 1928-29 to Rs. 14,000 in 1935-36.

## Irrigation in India 1934-35

### Official Statistical Review

A statistical review published from Simla, dated the 21st. September 1936 shows that among all the wonders of India its irrigation system must rank foremost from all points of view—engineering, economic, agricultural, and nation-building. This statis-

tical review is that of irrigation in India for 1934-35, issued by the Industries and Labour Department of the Government of India, which summarises very briefly the returns and progress throughout the provinces.

The achievements of irrigation engineers in India can be vividly summed up in a few sentences (says a press note issued by the Department of Industries and Labour, Government of India).

(a) The area under irrigation by Government Works alone totalled 29,898,000 acres, nearly a seventh of the whole area under crops in British India. This is even more remarkable when it is remembered that crops on irrigated land are better and more nutritive than those relying upon natural water supplies.

(b) The total capital outlay, direct or indirect on irrigation and navigation works, works under construction, is Rs. 15,089 lakhs.

(c) With a gross revenue for the year of Rs. 1,234 lakhs and working expenses of Rs. 492 lakhs, the net return on capital comes to the satisfactory figure of 4.9 per cent. (though the Sukkur Barrage yielded no revenue this year and the Cauvery Mettur System only Rs. 598,000).

(d) In addition, India may be said to have benefited generally to the extent of Rs. 9,111 lakhs, this being the estimated value of crops from areas receiving State irrigation.

Towards this unique record numerous systems throughout British India have contributed. For example, in this review details are given of approximately 110 works classed as productive, that is, which are for protection against famine or floods or are in other ways in the public interest. In other words, there are many more than 300 irrigation schemes in operation in British India alone. Nowhere else in the world is there a country with a total approaching a half or a quarter of that figure. And of these 300 works, at least 70 are of a major description. This, of course, does not take into account the numerous petty irrigation works; for Madras Presidency alone has over 35,000 of these serving about 3,000,000 acres of land.

#### NEW PROJECTS

One of the most interesting parts of the review is that which deals with new projects. The first part of Government's object in developing irrigation has been achieved,—vast areas of agricultural land which used to be precarious (subject to one dry year in five and one severe drought in ten years) are now protected by irrigation against famine. Now the second part of Government's scheme is well in hand,—turning deserts and other previously uncultivable land into valuable agricultural districts with the help of irrigation and by the same means improving other crops. During the last fifty years the number of acres under irrigation in British India has been increased from 10,500,000 to over 30,000,000 and this latter figure may well reach 50,000,000 when allowance is made for the natural expansion of existing schemes.

Before dealing with these new projects the general position can be outlined. This is best done in tabular form :—

Province.	Average area irrigated in triennium 1931-34. Acres.	Area irrigated in 1934-35. Acres.
Madras	7,456,630	7,302,390
Bombay Deccan	378,073	387,513
Sind	3,915,240	4,069,350
Bengal	55,194	129,869
United Provinces	3,737,519	3,827,351
Punjab	10,943,796	10,486,146
Burma	2,077,865	2,054,078
Bihar & Orissa	880,043	853,727
Central Provinces (excluding Berar)	381,362	323,592
N. W. F. Provinces	393,066	409,572
Rajputana	28,249	28,537
Baluchistan	20,968	20,533
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,267,715</b>	<b>29,898,267</b>

\* Excluding 31,498 acres irrigated by the Paharpur canal for which at present no capital and revenue accounts are kept.

The slight falling-off in the number of acres irrigated is due to a number of causes chief among which was the satisfactory rainfall during the year 1934-35, lessening the demands of agriculturists upon supplies of artificial water.

As in previous years, the Punjab Province showed the highest return on capital, namely, 14.4 per cent, while others were North-West Frontier Province 8 per cent, Madras 7.5 per cent, Burma 5 per cent and the United Provinces 4.7 per cent.

#### LOD BARRAGE

Taking just a few of the biggest projects mentioned, the Lloyd (Sukkur) Barrage and Canals Construction Scheme—as the greatest work of its kind in the world—must come first. By the time the whole scheme of canals is completed, the cost, it is estimated, will have reached Rs. 2,000 lakhs (£15,000,000). This will include 6,400 miles of canals, the excavation of 7,520 million cubic feet of soil, the building of 1,900 bridges and regulators, and will command 7,500,000 acres, an area two and a half times the size of Palestine.

The Review points out that the period surveyed was the third year of the operation of the Barrage Canals. Up to this point, there is the encouraging report that,—"Their general working was satisfactory. The important construction work carried out during the year under review consisted of the excavation of main and branch water-courses and the construction of modules (a special kind of outlet for water from the Government canal to the cultivator's drain) and huge pipe culverts (simpler form of outlet than the module).

Though it hardly comes under the heading of "new projects", the Review comments upon the completion of another great engineering achievement,—the Cauvery Mettur System. There has been irrigation of a kind in this area from prehistoric times, but it must have been to a large extent defective and certainly not comprehensive. A dam just over a mile long has been built, impounding a 60-square mile lake with 93,500,000 cubic feet of water. The total cost of all the works, including hundreds of miles of canals and distributories, is estimated at Rs. 608 lakhs (£4,900,000).

In addition to the development of irrigation, a hydro-electric scheme is expected to be completed in 1938. The Review remarks:—"The potentialities of Mettur as an industrial centre are now considerable for the area will possess the great advantages of cheap power, an ample supply of water and proximity to cotton and groundnut tracts, and there are also factory sites in the vicinity of the railway and the river Cauvery."

#### OTHER SCHEMES

Other irrigation schemes under consideration in different Provinces are:—

##### MADRAS

(i) With a view to relieving an area about 20,000 acres from submersion caused by the floods in the Coringa arm of the Godavari river and by the backing of such floods along the Teki drain during heavy floods in the Godavari river, two alternative schemes were under consideration in consultation with the French authorities. These were (i) to build a tidal lock at the head of the Coringa river near the French settlement at Yanam, and (ii) to provide banks on either side of the Teki drain and some other drains and to construct suitable inlets.

(2) A large project for impounding the waters of the Tungabhadra river has been under consideration for long time. Technical and financial difficulties, and the problem of reconciling rival claims to share in the waters of the river have stood in the way of the execution of the project. The general question of the allocation of the waters of the Tungabhadra is now under examination with the Governments concerned.

(3) Another large scheme under consideration is the Lower Bhavani project in the Coimbatore district.

(4) A few other smaller schemes were also in different stages of investigation and consideration. Among these were proposals for constructing an anicut across the Pillaperu to augment the supply in the Mopad main channel, and for the restoration of the old course of the Uyyacondan channel in the Trichinopoly district.

##### BOMBAY

(1) The project for remodelling the first few miles of the Pravara Left Bank canal, which have silted heavily, has been prepared and is under consideration.

(2) The preparation of the Waldevi Tank project, which is intended to provide Nank town, Deolali cantonment, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the Government Central Jail, with an adequate supply of water, was also in progress during the year.

(3) The Kelagson Tank project, which is intended to supplement the storage in the Erak Tank at Sholapur, with a view to meeting fully the irrigation requirements of the tract under command and also the non-agricultural needs of Sholapur town with its cotton mills, has been prepared in rough and is under consideration.

#### BENGALE

Survey and investigation works in connection with the Darkeeswar Reservoir and more Reservoir project, were continued during the year.

Investigation of several other irrigation schemes was also undertaken during the year.

The Grand Trunk Canal Project is still held in abeyance pending a further consideration of the scheme.

Fairly restricted dredging was undertaken in the Lower Kumar river during the year under review. The Kotilla service used the Lower Kumar river up to 31st October 1934. A through steamer service between Khulna and Madaripur was maintained up to the 27th November, 1934 and thereafter Khulna-Madaripur steamers only went up to Fatchpur (Sindighat) and passengers and goods were transhipped there to a ferry service which was maintained for the rest of the year.

The Attribanks river, which forms a cross country connection between the Rupsa and the Madhumati rivers, is gradually deteriorating on account of the formation of a number of shoals almost throughout the whole length of the river. During the year under review it was decided not to dredge the river since an alternative route via the Halifax Cut was available for use by the various steamer companies. The steamer traffic was accordingly diverted to the Halifax Cut route from the 15th December, 1934 until the end of the year under review. The Mangalpur shoal in the Madhumati river was dredged as it showed signs of deterioration.

#### UNITED PROVINCES

A new reservoir at Khutgaon to increase the storage for the Dhasan canal.

A new reservoir on the Shahsad Nadi, a tributary of the Betwa river, to supplement the storage lost by the silting of the Dhukwan reservoir.

The proposed construction of the Ashraura canals and alternative proposals for the Karamnasa canals.

Preliminary investigations were made and Survey Division was opened for the Fyzabad electricity and Ghogra pumping scheme. The object of the scheme is to pump 180 cubecs from the Ghogra river for irrigation in the Fyzabad district as a preliminary step towards the electrification of the Eastern districts of Oudh.

#### PUNJAB

A large number of important works are in progress and a five-year drainage programme for the relief of waterlogging, to cost Rs. 40 lakhs has been launched. A number of schemes under the five-year programme were advanced during the year. Actual construction was started on the Budhi Nallah on the Upper Jhelum canal, Akalgarh Saidnagar Drains on the Lower Chenab canal and the Lower Ranjwah Drain on the Lower Jhelum canal. The total expenditure incurred on various anti-waterlogging measures during the year under review amounted to Rs. 8,51,949.

The Thal, Bhakra and Havel Projects remained under consideration.

#### BURMA

An estimate for the proposed left bank canal, to take off above the projected new Daing Weir on the Pankung river was under preparation.

An estimate amounting to Rs. 1,30,000 was prepared for providing a masonry weir with link canals to replace the dangerous Letpanchitaw village bound on the Chaungmagyi channel, but owing to strong objections from the local cultivators sanction to the work has been held in abeyance.

#### NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

(1) A scheme or lift irrigation of the area near Risalpur was under investigation.

(2) A scheme for the control of the Tank Zam and the Gurnal river has been investigated but is not likely to be executed immediately.

... to give an adequate picture of the constant and ever-increasing activities of irrigation engineers in India in a few pages with a number of tables



statements in conveying briefly the vastness and invaluable nature of this work in India.

## The Central Board of Irrigation

### H. K. the Viceroy's Speech

His Excellency the Viceroy, opening the annual meeting of the Central Board of Irrigation, at New Delhi on the 31st. October 1936 said :

Gentlemen, It gives me great pleasure to be able to open the proceedings of the seventh annual meeting of the Central Board of Irrigation and I thank you for having invited me to do so.

India is predominantly an agricultural country and agriculture, her chief industry, is dependent to an essential degree on irrigation. We are all of us proud to think that India should possess an irrigation system which is the most important in the world today and I would like to take this opportunity to pay my tribute to the long line of distinguished irrigation engineers to whose labours that system is due and who can claim to have contributed in the most material degree to laying the foundation of India's prosperity.

You gentlemen, the successors today of those great men who have rendered such signal service in the past, carry on their work and I am well aware of the degree to which it is your good fortune to be able to add to the material prosperity of this country, to remedy the defects which knowledge and experience have brought to light and to assist in spreading still further the benefits of irrigation to the Indian agriculturist and to India as a whole. The debt of India to you and to your predecessors is a heavy one. The general appreciation of the importance of that debt can not but be at once a source of legitimate satisfaction to you and an incentive second to none to the continued and active pursuit of your arduous labour.

The sums which have been spent by Government on irrigation in this country are vast. The total amount so far expended on irrigation works approximates to 150 crores of rupees but vast as may be that sum it would be foolish to allow the mere magnitude of the figure of expenditure to absorb attention. For the area served by the works on which that sum has been spent over a period of 80 years, raises crops annually to the value of 100 crores of rupees and taking into account the value of those crops every 18 months sees the repayment of the capital expenditure. I am glad to have the opportunity to pay this public tribute to the fact that the construction and maintenance of this vast irrigation system has been made possible by the services of the highly trained and skilled army of engineers whom you represent here today.

Of the problems of vital importance to India today not the least important is that of the food for her rapidly increasing population. The present rate of increase of that population is a fact of profound significance and it is in my view one of the issues which is likely to prove to be of the greatest importance to the future Governments of this country.

In a recent report the public health commissioner with the Government of India states that the population is expected to increase to 400 millions in 1941 and that it is increasing at the rate of about four millions per year. His report states further that only about three-fourths of an acre per head of population in British India is under cultivation for food purposes. These facts are staggering and you will agree with me that they must give matter for serious thought to all thinking men and women in India. The investigations which are being carried on by the department concerned with agricultural research will doubtless result in increased productivity of the land but if our food resources are to keep pace with the increase in population, means must be found of bringing large tracts of country still unproductive under fruitful cultivation and there is no way in which this can so effectively be done as by extending facilities for irrigation.

A recent development in this country and one of great importance is that of hydro-electric generating schemes on irrigation canals by the utilisation of power available at canal falls. The advantages of irrigation from the tube wells as compared with the ordinary method of irrigation from canals are, as I see it, that an area can be developed in accordance with demand, that there is not the large initial outlay which may be lying unproductive awaiting development of the country, that the capital outlay per acre of water used for irrigation is less than under War control system and that water is available as and when required, the cultivator paying for it on a volumetric basis. I need not emphasise the importance of a development

which results in the economic use of water and which is of benefit to Government and the cultivator alike. The extraction of water from the subsoil for irrigation is not, of course, a new departure. The new departure consists in the fact that it is being undertaken by means of electrically operated tube wells on a large scale.

The largest scheme of this nature and one in which I have taken a close personal interest is the Ganges Canal Hydro-Electric scheme in the United Provinces. That scheme will command an area of 1,300 square miles of agricultural country and supply electric power at cheap rates primarily for irrigation and agricultural purposes. While a portion of the power generated will be allotted to industries and railways a major share will be assigned to tube well irrigation and will provide water for those areas which are not within command of gravity canals. Power will in addition be available for agricultural purposes and will be at the disposal of the farmer in the crushing of sugar cane, the grinding of wheat, the ginning of cotton, the hulling of rice and similar operations. The Ganges Canal Hydro-Electric scheme is the most important scheme of tube well irrigation which has hitherto been undertaken but I cannot but ask myself whether there may not be other areas in India which would lend themselves to development in this manner and I would suggest that the possibilities of the situation merit closer investigation. I would suggest too that it might be well worth while in future irrigation schemes to consider the possibility of hydro-electric development from the power available at the falls, particularly in those areas which are at some distance from the hill where power is obtainable from natural falls and in deciding the grouping of falls on canals and the design of the falls themselves to aim at providing conditions which will admit of an easy development on these lines at a later stage should circumstances justify such development.

I observe from the report of the provincial research officers that considerable attention has been paid to the question of subsoil water surveys in irrigated areas. This is a matter which is in my view of great importance not only from the point of view both of preventing water-logging and deterioration of the soil by the accumulation of salts and of future developments of the kind to which I have just referred. I feel no doubt too as to the desirability of a further advance in our knowledge of the action of subsoil water under certain conditions. It would not indeed perhaps be too much to say that it is almost as important if not as important to make a survey of subsoil water and to keep that survey up-to-date. As it is to make a survey of the surface soil it is clearly necessary from the point of view of future development of irrigation under systems of tube-wells to know not only the quantity of water which can be extracted from the ground and the source of the underground supply but also the chemical analysis of the water itself.

It is a matter of real satisfaction to me that a recommendation made by the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India over whose deliberations I had the honour to preside should have played so considerable a part in shaping your organization. The recommendation which I have in mind was the recommendation that the Government of India should constitute a central bureau of irrigation which would establish and maintain a comprehensive library of irrigation publications both Indian and foreign for the use of irrigation engineers and which would act as a clearing house for information needed by provincial officers. I am glad to think that the Government of India in the light of their consultation with the provincial Governments should have decided to improve on our recommendations and to link the bureau with the Central Board of Irrigation, recognizing the latter from a mere panel of provincial chief engineers from which technical sub-committees could be constituted for examining irrigation projects as necessity arose to an active body meeting at regular intervals with a permanent office which also serves as a bureau of irrigation information.

The board and the bureau have done work of the utmost value in the brief six years since their establishment in November, 1930. The board has provided several sub-committees to investigate important technical problems not the least important of which has been the committee on the distribution of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries on the successful conclusion of whose labours Sir Frank Noyce congratulated the chairman and members of the committee at your last annual meeting. The recommendations of that committee are still under consideration in consultation with the local Governments and the States concerned but I am glad to be able to say that there is every hope that a solution of this very complex and thorny question will be found along the lines proposed by the committee.

A further service of the utmost value which the board and bureau provides and which will be of still greater importance under the new constitution is to afford

facility for the regular and systematic inter-change of-views between provinces and provinces which places the experience of any one at the disposal of all. During the past year two important sub-committees have met and deliberated, one on the question of water-logging in Sind and the other on the Haveli (Punjab) project. Both these are projects which are of far-reaching concern to the provinces concerned and I am sure that the reports submitted by the sub-committees will be of the greatest assistance to my Government in dealing with these most important projects.

The bureau has built up a valuable library of publications at the moment numbering more than 4000. The importance of an authoritative reference library of this character and on the scale needs no emphasis from me. The board has too established contact with all the important irrigating countries of the world and it includes in the range of its association engineering institutions, societies, colleges and eminent engineers in very many different countries. I feel confident that as time passes this institution will prove itself in an increasingly marked degree a clearing house of the first importance for information on irrigation matters, not only in India but in all countries where irrigation is of any importance. Nor can I fail to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the value of the work done by your research committee in collaboration with the provincial research officers. I have touched briefly on the achievements of your service. I have in no way endeavoured to cover the whole of the field of your operations but what I have said is I think sufficient to show that the organization you have built up must continue to exist subject possibly to modifications in certain respects and to play a part of great importance in the further development of irrigation.

Under the new constitution irrigation will be a provincial subject and the sanction of the Secretary of State will no longer be necessary as at present to the projects of provincial Governments which under the existing audit rules have to be submitted to the Government of India for his approval but with the harnessing of the waters of the great river systems of this country to agriculture the interests of neighbouring provinces and States must necessarily become involved in an increasing degree and I see little doubt that the closest contact with the central Government will in these circumstances continue to be necessary. It was with these considerations in view that the elaborate provision embodied in sections 130 to 134 of the Government of India Act was devised by Parliament with a view to the harmonious and equitable settlements of such disputes as might arise out of interference with water supplies and I am satisfied that under the new dispensation the Governor-General will continue to require the expert advice and assistance which an organization such as yours can alone afford him.

I observe that the report prepared by your secretary refers to the inadequate publicity which India's achievements in this sphere have received in the past. Inadequate as that publicity may have been it is my strong view that nothing should be left undone to remedy any past shortcomings in this respect. I can assure you, gentlemen, that there is in all informed circles and in all countries in which irrigation is a matter of active importance, a deep and full realization of the importance of what has been achieved in this country, but it goes without saying that it is not enough that the magnitude of those achievements and their vital importance to the welfare of India as a whole and of the agricultural population in particular should be appreciated outside India. It is even more important that the people of this country should realize more adequately than they may perhaps so far have done, how great is the debt of India to her irrigation engineers, how vitally essential irrigation and agriculture are to the material advancement of India and in how marked a degree both working hand in hand can ensure her prosperity in the years to come.

I notice that one of the questions to be discussed at your meeting is that of the establishment of central research station for irrigation. The Royal Commission on Agriculture concluded in the light of their investigations that such an institution was not desirable and that provincial research was of greater importance but since the date of our report much has happened and much further experience has been gained. I understand that during the past ten years as the result largely of the use now made of models in solving irrigation and river control problems there is now a strong demand for research of an all-India nature. I attach great importance to this work which, if successful, should make a most material contribution towards the solution of a set of problems important in many areas and in some of pressing urgency and significance. The finance of such an institution is a matter which calls for the consideration of all likely to derive benefit from its operation but I am not perhaps transgressing any proper boundaries if I say that its importance to the

future provincial Governments is so great that it is my earnest trust that they, since the matter is primarily one of concern to individual provinces in their varying circumstances, will be prepared to share in supporting a central research station of the nature proposed. They can rely on the fullest and most whole-hearted co-operation of the Government of India in the work of a such a station and I can assure you of my own close personal interest in its operations.

Your agenda is a heavy one and I do not wish to detain you longer. I thank you again for having invited me to address you to-day and I trust sincerely that the deliberations upon which you are about to embark may be fruitful of benefit to you, to the great cause of the organisation and development of irrigation in India and so to the agriculturist and to the province to which he belongs. Let us never forget that the great and imposing works for which your predecessors and you are responsible, the mighty barrage and the majestic canal full charged with its life-giving contents that these are all without meaning or purpose unless and until they contribute to deliver to the field of the cultivator that humble rill of water upon which his hopes and his livelihood depend.

## Live Stock in India

### Fourth Census Report

A press note dated Simla, 2nd. October 1936, issued by the Education, Health and Lands department, Government of India, says :—

The report on the fourth census of livestock in India, which has just been published, shows that there were in British India excluding Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, 113 million heads of bovine cattle made up roughly of about 84 million heads of oxen and 29 million heads of buffaloes. The total figure for this census is over 5 millions or about 5 per cent. higher than that recorded at the preceding census.

Oxen accounted for an increase of 2.7 millions and buffaloes for an increase of 2.5 millions. In the case of oxen, there was an increase of a little over 3 millions in young stock, but bulls and bullocks showed a decrease of about half a million, the reduction occurring mainly in Madras.

Cows recorded a decrease of over a lakh, the decline occurring mainly in the Central Provinces and Berar.

Both male and cow buffaloes increased in number, the former by nearly a quarter of a million and the latter by little over half a million, the variations occurring mainly in the United Provinces and the Punjab.

Sheep declined in number by over half a million, the notable decreases being in Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Berar.

Goats numbered 26 millions, showing an increase of over one million, as compared with the previous census, the noticeable increases being in the United Provinces and the Punjab.

There were no appreciable variations in the total number of horses and ponies, but donkeys increased by about a lakh. Mules numbered 65,000 and camels a little over half a million.

Ploughs and carts gave a return of 17 and 5 millions, respectively, showing a slight increase (mainly in the United Provinces) as compared with the previous census figures.

The total number of sugarcane crushers (worked by power and bullocks), oil engines with pumps for irrigation purposes, electric pumps for tube wells and tractors as reported in the present census were 457,000, 10,000 and 7,000 respectively.

A considerably larger number of Indian States participated in the present census than in the previous one, and this gradual increase in the area covered renders impossible any comparison with the totals recorded at the previous census. The figures of the present census relate to about 60 per cent. of the total area of Indian States as compared with 50 per cent. covered by the preceding census. Information, therefore, is still incomplete so far as the Indian States are concerned. The present census gives a return for the Indian States of nearly 54 and half million for bovine cattle, consisting of nearly 42 million oxen and 12 and half million buffaloes, 18 million for sheep

a little over 15 and half million for goats, nearly three quarters of a million for horses and ponies, nearly 13,500 for mules, over half a million for donkeys, and nearly half a million for camels. Ploughs found in the Indian States number nearly 6 and half millions, carts a little over 2 millions, sugarcane crushers (worked by power and bullocks) nearly half a million, oil engines with pumps for irrigation purposes nearly 8,000, electric pumps for tube wells nearly 1,200, and tractors also 1,200.

#### LIVESTOCK IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

It is interesting to note here, for purposes of comparison, the figures for livestock wealth in some of the more important of the foreign countries as recorded in the latest census, which in Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Argentine took place in 1934, and in the rest in 1935. The figures are as follows, and are given in the nearest millions.

	Cattle (Oxen).	Sheep	Horses
Great Britain and Northern Ireland	9	25	1
France	15½	9½	3
Netherlands	2½	7	3
Germany	19	4	3½
		(exclusive of army horses).	
United States of America	60½	50	12
Canada	9	3½	8
Australia	14	113	3
New Zealand	4½	29	3
Argentine	31	39½	Not available.

The next preceding census of livestock in these countries took place in 1930, and comparison with the returns at that census shows that all these countries with the exception of Canada and Argentine, where there have been decreases by 1.3 per cent. and 4.2 per cent. respectively, record an increase in their cattle wealth. The most notable increase has been in the case of Australia, namely by 19.9 per cent. New Zealand comes next with 14.1 per cent., Great Britain and Northern Ireland follow with 12.7 per cent. and Netherlands with 11.5 per cent. The increases in the case of France, Germany and U.S.A. have been 1.3, 2.4 and 1.6 per cent. respectively. For sheep, too, Great Britain, Netherlands, Germany and Australia record an increase by 1.1, 40.2, 13.0, and 2.2 per cent. respectively. In the other countries named there have been decreases. For horses, all these countries show a decline, the greatest decline being in the case of the United States of America, by 13.6 per cent., Canada coming next with 11 per cent., and Great Britain and Northern Ireland a third with 7.1 per cent. It appears that Denmark, Roumania, and Norway are the only countries which record an increase in the number of their horses by 2.4, 12.4 and 3.3 per cent., respectively.

The idea of taking a livestock census in India dates back to 1916, when the Government of India, after consulting local Governments and Administrations decided that a census of cattle should be taken throughout British India between December 1919 and April 1920, and that this census should be repeated quinquennially thereafter. The Indian States were also invited to hold similar census simultaneously with the British provinces. The first all-India census was accordingly held generally in the cold weather of 1919-20, and the second during the same period of 1924-25. It was felt that the period of enumeration at these censuses, namely from December to April was too wide and that the value of the results obtained was possibly vitiated to some extent by the inter-provincial movements of cattle. The desirability of holding the census simultaneously throughout India was also stressed by the Royal Commission of Agriculture. The third census was therefore held generally in January 1932. The fourth census, which is the latest and the figures of which have been given above, was, with some important exceptions, held in January 1935, but two provinces, namely Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, were not able to participate at all in this census, mainly owing to financial reasons. The results set forth are therefore, to some extent incomplete.

A revised classification of livestock was adopted for the census with a view to obtain more complete information than was available under the previous classification and to avoid lack of uniformity in the enumeration of the different kinds of livestock. Provision was also made in the revised classification for additional information relating to agricultural implements and machinery, such as iron ploughs, oil engines

for irrigation purposes, electric pumps for tube wells, tractors and sugarcane crusher. The collection of this information was, however, left optional. Burma among the British India provinces found itself unable to adopt a revised classification of live-stock; there was also slight departure from the standard classification in the case of the United Provinces. The revised classification was followed as far as possible by most of the Indian States, but some found it necessary to adhere to the old classification.

## Co-operative Movement in India

### Statistical Statement of Progress

Details of India's progress in co-operation during the 28 years from 1906-7 onwards are given in the 17th of the series of publications entitled 'Statistical Statements relating to the Co-operative Movement in India' issued from the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics in December 1936.

The average number of co-operative societies for All-India for the four years from 1906-7 to 1909-10 was 1926. This number in 1934-35, figures for which are the latest available, stood at 108,011. The average for the four years from 1906-7 to 1909-10 for Central Societies, (including Provincial and Central Banks, and Banking Unions) and Supervising and Guaranteeing Unions (including Re-insure Societies) was 17. In 1934-35, the Central Societies alone returned a figure of 626, and the Supervising and Guaranteeing Unions 789. The corresponding figure for Agricultural Societies (including Cattle Insurance Societies) was 93,180, against the average of 1,713 for the four years from 1906-7 onwards, and during these 28 years Non-Agricultural Societies, (including other Insurance Societies) have risen from 196 to 11,436.

The total number of members of primary societies during this period has similarly gone up from 161,910 to 4,409,637, and the working capital from Rs. 68,12,000 to Rs. 96,56,52,000.

In other words, during a period of 28 years from 1906-7 onwards number of co-operative societies in India has roughly increased 55 times, membership 27 times and working capital 142 times.

Coming to the position of the cooperative movement as it was in 1934-35, comparative figures give some very interesting information. In the total number of societies in British India, Bengal leads with 23,426, the Punjab is second with 21,893 and Madras third with 13,419. The number of societies per 1,000,000 inhabitants for these provinces is however, 45.5, 68.2 and 27.6 respectively. Considered from this latter point of view, in British India Coorg comes easily the first with 128.0. Ajmer-Merwara a close second with 122.2 and the Punjab a bad third with 68.2. Among the Indian States Gwalior has the largest number of societies, namely 4,301. Kashmir comes next with 2,949, and Hyderabad third with 2,800. The corresponding number of societies per 100,000 inhabitants, or rather, put briefly, the density figures for these States were 116.2, 77.6 and 18.4 respectively. From the density point of view, Bhopal is first with 137.9, Gwalior second with 116.2, and Kashmir third with 77.6. For the whole of India, the density figure is 33.0.

The membership figures are equally interesting. Madras has 875,901 members, which is the largest in British India. The second largest figure comes from Bengal, which has 783,698 and the third from the Punjab namely 735,837 but the number of members per 1,000 inhabitants in these Provinces is 18.0, 15.2 and 29.7 respectively. Considered from this latter point of view, namely the extent of the permeation of the cooperative idea, the figure for the Punjab, though the highest amongst these three Provinces is, however, the third in the whole of British India, the first being Coorg, with 80.8 and the second Ajmer-Merwara, with 50.2.

There has been some progress in the number of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural primary societies too. The number of such societies increased during the year from 94,335 Agricultural, and 11,118, Non-Agricultural, to 92,920 Agricultural and 11,436 Non-Agricultural societies respectively. These numbers include

insurance societies in both cases. The total membership and working capital at the close of 1934-35 for Agricultural societies were 3,008, 152 and Rs. 24,22,00,000 respectively, and for Non-Agricultural societies 1,887,753 and Rs. 21,63,00,000 the total number of members for two together being 4,895,905, and the working capital Rs. 55,85,00,000 respectively.

The statements from which these details have been taken have been compiled, with certain modifications, on the lines recommended by the Committee on Cooperation in India in 1915. The publication gives a detailed record of the main statistics relating to cooperative societies in the various Provinces of British India (with the exception of Baluchistan, where the cooperative movement has as yet made little progress, and in the Indian States of Mysore, Baroda, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Gwalior, Indore, Kashmir, Travancore and Cochin for the year 1934-35.

## Aviation in India 1935-36

### Working of Mail Services

"India's future in the development of civil aviation is intimately connected with the great expansion of air transport which is now unfolding itself within the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is important, therefore, to realise that in point of mileage the air routes of the Empire countries as a whole have recently taken a leading place amongst the Empires and States of the world," says the annual report of the Director of Civil Aviation for 1935-36.

The figures showing the progress of the World's air routes in the few years since regular transport began illustrate the magnitude and importance of the efforts that have been made, and are being continued with increasing energy, to secure the benefits of rapid air communication and the advantages of being early in the field.

Regular air routes were first established in 1919. Ten years later, when the England-India service was inaugurated, the air routes in regular operation throughout the world measured 125,900 and 53,370,000 miles were flown on these routes. At the present time more than 225,000 miles of air routes have been established on a regular basis and are being flown in many cases with greatly increased frequency and with much larger and faster types of aircraft. The mileage flown annually now exceeds 100,000,000 miles.

The following table indicates the development of air routes by the leading nations during the past three years :—

#### MILEAGE OF REGULAR AIR ROUTES

	Great Britain	India	British Commonwealth of Nations.
1933	11,670	5,180	31,670
1934	13,750	5,830	41,390
1935	19,739	6,395	53,391
	United States of America	France	Germany
1933	47,687	21,450	17,228
1934	50,800	21,290	23,440
1935	52,451	24,451	23,391

The traffic figures show that this foresight is not misplaced, and that ever-increasing use is being made of the air highways. The growth of British air traffic, in particular, offers a remarkable example of air transport development in a country where a conservative policy has been pursued as regards subsidies and where the conditions are unfavourable for the advantages of flying to be displayed.

Below are given the traffic figures extracted from Appendices 7-11 for India's internal feeder services, and while there has been expansion of air mails on these

routes it can be said with truth that the benefits of air transport in India remain yet to be appreciated by the travelling public.

#### INDIAN REGULAR AIR SERVICES

	Miles flown	Passengers Carried	Airmails tons.
1933	153,690	155	10.5
1934	345,771	757	21.3
1935	553,754	553	43.4

In the Report of 1934-35 mention was made of a scheme for the reorganisation of the Empire air mail services. So far as India is concerned, the scheme involves:—

(a) an increase in the number of services on the trans-India route from two to five weekly in each direction;

(b) a "speeding up" of schedules so that the journey between Croydon and Karachi will be completed in about 2 and a half days;

(c) the carriage of all first class Empire mail (letters and postcards) by air."

If these changes are introduced, and it is found possible for India to reap the full benefit of them as a partner in the scheme, the effect upon Civil Aviation in India will be of the first importance. The postal and financial details have, however, required prolonged examination and in the present Report it is impossible to make any further announcement on the subject.

Important and far-reaching changes have been made in the plans and estimates drawn up in 1934-35 for capital works. The broaching of the Empire Air Mail Scheme showed that by 1937-38 air mail services would be much more frequent and would be operating regularly by night as well as by day. It therefore became necessary to consider the intensive development of the existing trans-India route and its two feeder routes,—Karachi-Bombay-Madras-Colombo and Karachi-Lahore.

During the six years from 1937-38 to 1933-34, only rudimentary facilities were provided on the trans-India route for day flying, and practically nothing was done towards the organisation of feeder routes.

An expenditure of Rs. 22,57,000 was sanctioned in 1934 for the general development of air routes in India over a number of years. Individual items have been carefully investigated as a result of which a revised programme has been drawn up and is now in course of execution. Concentrating on first essentials the works to be immediately sanctioned are those which are necessary to ensure safe operation on the trans-India route and the two feeder routes and to provide for regular night flying on the Karachi-Calcutta section. The intensification of the traffic which is now expected on these routes will demand certain further improvements which have been allowed for in the programme and will involve a total expenditure of Rs. 1,10,12,625 (£855,960). The report contains a summary of the numerous new works involved in this programme.

This scheme of organisation, when fully completed, will provide a standard of efficiency on the three principal air routes sufficient to ensure that air mail services can be operated with safety and reliability by day and by night, and will thus bring India into line with other countries similarly equipped.

These improvements in the ground organisation involve a considerable expansion of staff, aerodrome, aircraft inspection, wireless and meteorology. The report shows that recruitment has and is taking place so that the personnel may be trained in their duties to meet the expanded requirements.

"It must not be supposed, however," the report adds, "that the capital works programme is final, for progress in civil aviation is rapid and continuous, and world operating practice is ceaselessly developing and improving."

#### ACCIDENTS

Dealing with accidents the report points out that during 1935 the total hours of flying by aircraft of Indian Registration was 37,325 compared with 18,413 hours the previous year. Notifiable accidents came to 22 as against 26 in 1934. Though the number of accidents was smaller, the consequences were much more serious, for 16 persons lost their lives as against 4 the previous year.

Particular care is taken to discover whether mechanical failure contributes in any way to accident, and where such failure is found or suspected, immediate action is taken to avoid its recurrence.



Remarkable increases in the carrying of mails and passengers across India are shown, but figures for individual enterprises suggest that the value of aviation to businessmen is by no means as appreciated yet as it is in other countries.

#### COMMERCIAL FLYING

Section 1 of the report deals with Commercial flying. No changes have taken place during the year under review in the constitution of the five operating companies engaged in regular air transport in India. The companies and the services they operate are as follows :—

Indian Airways Ltd. (Trans-Continental Karachi-Singapore operated jointly with Imperial Airways, Ltd.)

Tata Sons Ltd : Karachi-Bombay-Madras, Bombay-Cannanore-Trivandrum.

Indian National Airways Ltd : Karachi-Lahore.

Himalayan Airways Ltd : Hardwar-Gauchar.

Irrawaddy Flotilla and Airways : Rangoon-Mandalay, Rangoon-Yonan-gyang.

Imperial Airways, Ltd., the Dutch K. L. M., and Air France have continued to cooperate air services across India.

The mileage of air routes in India for 1935 totals 6,395 compared with 5,830 in 1934. The total for the British Empire is now 53,291 an increase of 11,901 miles over 1934.

The figures for mails and passengers to and from India show a striking improvement, Imperial Airways carrying 82.2 tons of mail and 983 passengers, compared with 59.2 tons of mail and 606 passengers the year before.

In this connection it is of interest to record that Imperial Airways Ltd., estimate that 10,500,000 letters (about 215 tons) were despatched by air from Great Britain during 1935 as compared with about 8,000,000 letters (122 tons) in 1934 and about 4,000,000 (85 tons) in 1933.

During 1935, 104 services were operated from London to Karachi, of which 87 arrived punctually and 17 were late. The delays arose through causes to a large extent outside Imperial Airways control. On repeated occasions the train connection between Paris and Brindisi was late and this was responsible for a day's delay on nine services. During the period from March 5 to 16, 1935, when there were civil disturbances in Greece, the service between Brindisi and Alexandria ran via Tobruk, Benghazi and Malta and delay was unavoidable.

The year 1935 commenced with the duplication of the Trans-India service operated jointly by Imperial Airways, Ltd., from Karachi to Calcutta, and the maintenance of weekly service from Calcutta to Singapore. From October, 1, 1935 the service then terminating at Calcutta was also extended to Singapore, so preparing the way for the duplication of the entire service from England to Australia which was completed in the following May.

43.7 tons of mail were carried in the east-ward direction and 42.5 tons in the west-ward direction, giving a total of 86.2 tons for the year as against 37.7 tons in 1934.

Mail traffic on the trans-India service increased at an even more satisfactory rate than that on the England-India service, the percentage increase for the year reaching 123.5 per cent as compared with 39 per cent on the Croydon-Karachi section.

Passenger traffic on the trans-India route has also shown improvement. The volume of this traffic is expressed in passenger-ton-miles, since individual passengers may fly over only one stage or over the entire distance from Karachi to Singapore. This table illustrates the increase :—

1933	Passengers ton miles	---	12,311
1934	" "	---	78,976.6
1935	" "	---	117,180.2

The number of registered private-owned aircraft in India, however, on December 31, 1935, was only 43, as against 42 the previous year. Of these, 14 were the property of ruling Princes and Rajas and 16 of other Indian gentlemen, all except six being of British design and manufacture.

One or two examples are given of the way private aeroplanes are used in India. A man of 65 years of age uses his aeroplane for the inspection of sugarcane and other crops throughout his estates. A Forest Service official made a complete duty tour round the whole of India, saving literally weeks of travel by train, the cost comparing favourably with that for a medium powered motor car.

A summary is given of the activities of air services within India. For example, Tata and Sons Ltd. on October 15, 1935, completed their third year of

operating the service—Karachi-Bombay-Madras. A considerable advance has been made in the weight of air mails carried. It is estimated that no less than 40 per cent of the mails carried on the England-India service are collected or distributed in South India by this route. During 1935 the mail loads totalled 302 tons, compared with 18.5 tons in 1934 and 10.5 tons in 1933. Passenger and freight traffic also increased substantially. The total mileage flown during the year was 257,610, an increase of 100 per cent over 1934—resulting from the doubling of the frequency in January, 1935. For the third successive year the route was flown without any accident involving injury to passengers or crew.

On October 29 of last year, there began an experimental weekly service between Bombay and Trivandrum. This service connects with the Bombay-Karachi-Madras route and shows a saving of 20 hours on the journey from Bombay to Goa, 43 and half hours to Cannanore and 46 hours to Trivandrum. The service was suspended this year in April, but provided further support is forthcoming it is hoped to resume after the monsoon season.

Indian National Airways, Ltd., had a disappointing year, having to close their regular services operated from Calcutta halfway through 1935, while early this year a further reduction of their Calcutta charter organisation had to be made. The company commenced to carry mails on the Karachi-Lahore route under Government contract in December 1934 and were immediately faced with the duplication of their service in January 1935 to conform with the main service. The Companies' costs were thereby considerably increased, while the mail loads carried in 1935, their first year of operation, remained substantially at the same level. As a result the Company were obliged to approach Government for assistance, and in view of the developments to be expected in 1937 with the Empire Air Mail Scheme, a special grant was agreed for 1936-37 to enable the Company to continue this service.

The Himalayan Airways, Ltd., conducted approximately 180 flights on their service between Hardwar, Agastmuni and Ganchar, which caters for pilgrims and for tourists. In addition, joy riding flights were undertaken. Various enterprises were carried through by the Irrawaddy Flotilla and Airways, Ltd., which during 1935 on regular air services flew 71,894 miles, carrying 322 passengers and 37 lbs. apart from a number of charter flights. Valuable air survey work was continued during the year by the Indian Air Survey and Transport, Ltd. This Company located the position of old copper workings in a part of Orissa, and completed an irrigation survey over an area of 280 sq. miles. Details are also given of other activities of private companies.

The work of the Flying Clubs has remained at substantially the same level as in the previous year. A new Flying Club has since been formed in the Hyderabad State but the Rangoon Flying School, run by Indian National Airways, has now been closed down. A revised system of granting subsidy to the seven flying clubs in British India has been introduced which covers a three-year period and it is hoped that with the greater security afforded the Clubs will be able to improve their economic position. It is noted that the recent developments in Great Britain have made it difficult to obtain qualified instructors for these clubs, but adjustments have been made which should facilitate the training of such men in India.

The flat rate for air mails to India introduced by the British General Post Office in December, 1934, (abolishing the extra surcharge for carriage by the Indian internal air services) and the reduced rates of combined postage and air surcharge in force in India for letters to England continued unchanged. So far as India is concerned the present rate of 7 and half annas for the first half oz. and 7 annas for each subsequent half oz. does not compare unfavourably with 6d. per half oz., charged by the British Post Office in respect of letters from the United Kingdom to India. No further reduction is contemplated until the whole question is reviewed in the light of the proposals for the carriage of all first class mail by air between Empire countries under the Empire Air Mail Scheme. About 25 per cent of letters from India to Empire countries are now sent by air.

# The Indianisation of Army

## Committee's Memorandum & Army Chief's Reply

Reproduced below is a memorandum prepared by a Committee of Members of both Houses of the Central Legislature, and His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief's reply to it.

The memorandum and reply mark the final stage of the Indianisation which had its origin in a Resolution moved in the Council of State on the 18th March 1936 by the Hon'ble Mr. Kalikar. The main point at issue was how to improve the quality of the candidates for the Indian Academy. During the discussion which ensued, H.E. the Commander-in-Chief promised to arrange an informal conference at which the points raised would be further discussed. After consultation with the members of the Legislature, a Committee of Members of both Houses of the Legislature was appointed.

The members were the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Lala Ramsaran Das, O.I.E., the Hon'ble Mohamed Hossain Imam subsequently replaced by the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Dr. Sir N. Choksy, Kt., O.B.E., the Hon'ble Pandit Prakash Narayan Sapru, the Hon'ble Raja Ghasanfar Ali Khan, the Hon'ble Sir Phiroze Sethna, Kt., O.B.E., the Hon'ble Mr. V. V. Kalikar, Sardar Mangal Singh, M.L.A., B. Das, Esq., M.L.A. and Lt. Col. Sir Henry Gidney, Kt., M.L.A.

This Committee held its first meeting on the 14th April. Following this, the members submitted to His Excellency the memorandum setting forth matters which they desired to discuss and on which they required detailed information. This information was provided, and a further meeting was held on the 26th September. Subsequently the Committee drew up and submitted the memorandum reproduced below, and the final meeting was held on the 4th October. The promises and undertakings made by His Excellency in his reply, which is reproduced after the memorandum, are now under examination with a view to seeing how effect can be given to them.

### Text of the Memorandum

At the outset we wish to make it clear that we do not agree with the policy which is being followed in regard to the Indianization of the Army. We think that the process of Indianization can be speeded up and we are definitely of the opinion that the present policy should be reviewed and substituted by one which would Indianise Officer ranks within a reasonable time. Our memorandum, however, is based on the assumption that Government are not prepared to review that policy in the immediate future. We have been told that it is not within our province in this Conference to suggest any reversal or modification of the present policy. We are therefore, contenting ourselves by making suggestions which in our opinion, would improve the quality of candidates for the open competitive examination for admission to the Indian Military Academy.

The first question on which we desire to express our views is in regard to the clause in the Indenture which parents or guardians of prospective officers have to execute under which they have to guarantee under certain eventualities a refund up to a maximum of Rs. 5,000 the cost of training at the Academy. We consider that the clause is too widely worded. The only conditions under which Government should be able to claim a refund should be definite misconduct on the part of the Cadet or giving up Army within five years from the date of his getting commission.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

The next point on which we wish to record our view is that the scholarships now granted by local governments to Cadets of the Indian Military Academy should be increased both in number and amount. We find that Bengal, the Punjab, Sind, Bihar and Orissa, Central Provinces, Assam & N. W. F. Pr. are not offering any scholarships. We see no reason why scholarships should not be offered by these administrations also. We therefore recommend that the Government of India should try and prevail upon the provinces to afford help in this direction. In our opinion these scholarships should be reserved to those who cannot afford to pay the full cost of education at the Academy themselves.

We are supplied with certain figures in regard to fees charged at the Indian Military Academy. We are given to understand that it would not be possible to reduce the fees. In our opinion the cost of Academy to Government of Rs. 8,925 would be substantially reduced, if Government accepted our recommendation to increase the number of cadets. We think, therefore, that an effort should be made to expand the Academy and thereby reduce the cost of education to Government at the Academy.

In any case we are strongly of opinion that the cost to a parent of Rs. 3,850 for the whole course at present at the Academy is, having regard to the economy condition of Indian middle classes, too high.

On the question of emoluments of Indian Officers we are supplied at the last conference with certain statements showing the budget of an Indian Officer. We are given to understand that Indian cadets during the period of twelve months that they join a British Unit are paid Rs. 35 extra per mensem. We think that the extra amount should be raised to Rs. 50.

#### RELAXATION WITH 'VARIETIES'

The next question considered by us was in regard to the Prince of Wales College. We are thankful to the Army Department for the information that was placed at our disposal in regard to this institution. We are struck by the fact that students who did not succeed in getting admission into the Indian Military Academy experience considerable difficulty in gaining admission into Universities for further prosecution of their studies. We therefore suggest that Government should take this into consideration and treat with the Universities so that a student who has passed the final examination of the Royal Military College is admitted into the University. It would be possible, if this were done, for products of the Prince of Wales' College to join a University straight after completing their course at the College.

On the question of King George's Indian Military Schools we would like to say that one objection that some of us have against these institutions is that they are all situated in the Punjab and that, therefore, boys who come from other provinces cannot profit from them. All of us consequently recommend that schools of that character should be opened up in the other parts of the country also.

We would strongly urge that there should be an expansion of the activities of the University Training Corps. We think that it might be possible to get over the financial difficulty by a substitution of Indian instructors in place of costlier British instructors. A University Corps should provide the nucleus of territorial army should be reserved for well qualified men of the University Corps and the territorials.

#### STAFF APPOINTMENTS

We desire to recommend that staff appointments should be given to Indians. The Committee note that there are a number of junior British officers who have not passed the Staff College examination, and who are holding staff appointments. In order to make the military profession more attractive we would like to see more Indians admitted into the Staff College and given Staff appointments.

The Committee believe that the Indians generally get commission at the age of 19 and a half while the Britishers obtain a commission at the age of 18 or 18 and a half. The Indian is further handicapped by the fact that he has to spend 2 and a half years at the Military Academy whereas the Britishers has to spend only a year and six months at Sandhurst. There is an apprehension that when the question of commanding regiment comes, an Indian Officer may have already reached the age of compulsory retirement. The Committee, therefore, strongly urge that some suitable steps should be taken to remove this disability.

Those of us who sent the memorandum in July last stand by it except for changes made herein.

(Signed) Phiroze Sethna, V. V. Kalikar, N. Choksy, Ramsaran Das, Ghaznafar Ali, P. N. Bapna, B. Das, Mangal Singh.

#### Commander-in-Chief's Reply

Gentlemen, I should like to begin by saying how glad I am to meet you all to-day. I understand that you had a full discussion with the Secretary and some of my officers; I have read your Memorandum with great interest; and I am particularly impressed, if I may say so, with the studied moderation and reasonableness of your recommendations.

There are large questions of policy lying behind the whole subject and I am particularly grateful that you have refrained from pressing me on these questions. If we must differ with regard to them, we can; I hope, agree to differ in a friendly way and I can assure you that I am just as anxious as any of you to make the present policy of Indianization a success. It is in this spirit that I have examined your detailed recommendations. You will realise that I cannot give you a direct and final answer on all of them off hand—but I now propose to go through them one by one. I shall pause after each item in case any of you may wish to ask a question, but I hope you will let me get through the business as quickly as possible.

**Question of Indenture.**—I am quite prepared to examine the wording of this document and revise it so as to make it clear that we do not wish to impose any liability on a parent or guardian if it is found that a particular cadet, either at the Academy or in the earlier years of his service, is unlikely to make a good officer, on account of some defect, perhaps, in temperament, but for no real fault of his own. We have never enforced the rights that the clause, as at present worded, gives us in this respect, and I don't think we should ever have done so. But it is just as well that parents should know this. On the other hand, I am glad you agree that in definite cases of misconduct, or where a young officer leaves the service of his own free will within a few years after receiving an expensive training from Government it is not unreasonable that we should have the legal protection that the Indenture gives us. I can assure you that we shall use our powers with discretion.

**Scholarships by Local Governments.**—I entirely agree with this recommendation and will certainly see that your views are brought prominently to the notice of Local Governments with our support.

**Cost of training at the Indian Military Academy.**—I agree that the cost to Government and also perhaps to the parent might be reduced if the number of cadets were increased but for reasons to which I have already alluded, I am afraid that is a question we cannot go into for the moment. Meanwhile, I am quite prepared to re-examine the present rates of fees and see whether any reduction is feasible. I cannot hold out any great hopes, and I am sure you will all realise that even a small reduction from the parents' point of view must mean considerable extra cost to Government, owing to the numbers involved. However, I will have the point most carefully examined.

**Allowance during attachment to British units.**—Here again I can only promise, at the moment, that your proposal will be carefully and sympathetically examined.

**Value of Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College Diploma.**—This is a subject about which I am afraid I do not know very much myself, but I will certainly take up with the proper authorities your suggestion that some greater academic value might be attached to the Prince of Wales' College Diploma.

**University Training Corps.**—We are even now engaged in working out a scheme for the expansion of the activities of the University Training Corps, but I don't think that is what you want or at any rate not all that you want. What you want, I understand, is an increase in the actual number of University Training Corps contingents in different parts of the country. That, of course, is a big question; but I can assure you that even if I do not think such an expansion would have very much effect from the point of view of the particular issue that we are now concerned with, I should positively welcome any measure that would help to produce a better class of officer for our present Territorial units and also a Reserve of Officers for our Indianizing units. I can assure you that the whole of this question is receiving our active consideration at Army Headquarters.

**Army class at Government College, Lahore.**—I cordially agree with your recommendation that information about the working and methods of the Army Class at the Government College, Lahore, should be distributed to other educational institutions in India and I will certainly see that is done. On the other hand, I am afraid I cannot possibly agree that the time has yet come to depart from the recommendations of the Sken Committee and the Indian Military College Committee in the matter of direct commissions from the Universities to the Regular Army. That may, or may not come in time. We are certainly not ready for it yet.

**Staff appointments.**—I do not think that the number of vacancies at the Staff College is really a matter that is affecting the quality of candidates for the Indian Military Academy. Nor could I agree to increase the number of vacancies, for that would produce more Staff College Graduates than we require. On the other hand I recognize that the matter is one that some of you take a particular interest in, and I would refer you to the answers on the subjects that I gave recently in the

## COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S VIEWS

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Council of State. I supplement what I have said by informing you that I am determined to treat Indian Officers in exactly the same way as British Officers in the matter of staff appointments. That is our policy at present and it will continue to be the policy. Incidentally I may tell you that, just as a few junior British officers are from time to time employed in Staff appointments without having passed the Staff College examination, so I find from our records we have a number of Indian officers. I know of at least four cases in which this has been done, and you must remember that the number of Indian officers of the requisite seniority is still small.

Age limits for retirement :—It has already been explained that Indian Officers passing out from the Indian Military Academy receive an antedate of one year so as to place them, as far as possible, on an equality with British Officers passing out of Sandhurst, where the course of instruction is a year shorter. This gives the two sets of officers the greatest possible equality of opportunity at the outset of their careers, but I agree that what is to happen at the end of their careers does constitute something of a problem ; for some of our officers, especially the Indian Army Cadets, may not get a Commission until they are well over 20 or even later. Fortunately, this is not a problem which can be called one of pressing urgency, nor do I honestly think it can be said that it has so far deterred a single candidate from embarking on a military career. But it is a problem that we already have under consideration and I hope we may be able to find a satisfactory and fair solution.

That, gentlemen, concludes the specific recommendation you have made and let me once again thank you for having put your case so reasonably. To be quite honest I must tell you that, in my own opinion, I don't think we ought to expect any very startling results from the acceptance of those of the recommendations that I have been able to accept. They may help, but they are not going to work miracles. As I have said before, my own view is that the process of expanding the field of choice and improving the quality of the competition cadetships, must inevitably be a gradual one. It must depend largely on public opinion : and you gentlemen, with your acknowledged influence, ought to be able to play an important part in helping to educate that opinion, and explain to prospective candidates or their parents what a military career means and what types of young men are suitable for such a career. You have not mentioned it in your Memorandum, but I should like to remind you that the offer made in the course of your discussions still remain open. We are willing, if you think it will be useful to prepare a pamphlet giving information on the above points, and give it as wide a circulation as we can afford.

# Convocation Addresses

## The Dacca University Convocation

Dacca—29th July 1936

The following is the text of the speech delivered by Mr. A. F. Rahman, Vice-Chancellor at the Annual Convocation of the University of Dacca on the 29th July 1936 :—

**YOUR EXCELLENCY AND CHANCELLOR,**

On behalf of the University of Dacca, I record at this Convocation our profound grief and sense of loss at the demise of His Most Gracious Majesty King George V, Emperor of India. The University, at meetings of the staff and students, the Court and Executive Council, have expressed its deep sympathy with the Royal family. We are assured by Your Excellency that this has been conveyed to the appropriate quarter. On this occasion, we convey again our respectful homage to His Majesty King Edward VIII on his accession to the throne of the British Empire. We have learnt with dismay and horror of the cowardly attempt that was made on the life of His Majesty and we request Your Excellency to convey our deep abhorrence of an act that has evoked indignation from every part of the Empire and our profound thankfulness on the providential escape of His Majesty.

Your Excellency, it is my privilege to welcome you again to preside over the annual Convocation of the University and to offer grateful thanks to you for your unflinching sympathy with our aspirations. Your Excellency's administration has been marked by firmness in combating the forces of disintegration and by vision in laying the foundations of the economic prosperity of this province. These efforts have resulted in a re-orientation of our public life and in practically every sphere there is an earnest attempt at reconstruction. This University very deeply appreciates Your Excellency's untiring efforts for educational reform, and the steps that have been taken as a beginning to solve the acute problem of educated unemployment and also to wean away intelligent youths from the sterile track of imagined service to the country. These are inestimable services to Bengal and the University has conferred on you the highest honour in its gift and by conferring this honour it honours itself. By allowing your name to be added to the roll of its honorary graduates, you have added distinction to the University. The recent announcement, which is really a unique tribute to Your Excellency, regarding the extension of Your Excellency's term of office has been received with genuine pleasure by all sections of the people of Bengal. We are indeed happy that for some time after the inauguration of the next constitution, Bengal will have the advantage of Your Excellency's great abilities and experience to guide her in the path of ordered progress and prosperity.

We have to-day conferred honorary degrees on Sir Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Abdur Rahim, Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, Sir Prafulla Chandra Roy, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Mr. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee. These names are honoured throughout India; they occupy an assured position in the republic of intellect and to the educated youth they are a source of inspiration. For their great services to their country, the University honour them.

It has been the practice on an occasion like this to mention some of the more important changes in the teaching staff of the University, but before doing so I should like to offer the congratulations of the University to its Treasurer, Mr. Shahabuddin, on his being called upon to fill temporarily the exalted office of an Executive Councillor. It is a matter of sincere gratification to the University that it furnishes so many members of the Bengal Cabinet. During Mr. Shahabuddin's absence from Dacca Rai Sumanikumar Ghose Bahadur, C. I. E., acted as Treasurer, and I take this opportunity of conveying the thanks of the University to him for the ability and energy with which he discharged his duties in the midst of his many preoccupations. We welcome Mr. Shahabuddin as Treasurer again.

The term of office of Dr. J. W. Fuok, Professor in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, came to an end in December 1935 and he left to take up an

appointment in Germany. In his place a distinguished student and teacher of this University Dr. Syed Moazzam Hossain, M. A., D. Phil. (Oxon.), till recently a Reader in the same Department, has been appointed Professor and steps are being taken to fill up the Readership vacated by Dr. Hossain. Dr. Fack served the University for 5 years loyally and with ability and on this occasion I would like to record the appreciation of the University for the distinguished services that he has rendered. Mrs. Fack also is entitled to our gratitude because throughout her stay here, she gave lessons in German to students and teachers without any remuneration and her un-failing interest and assistance have been of great value to those who attended her classes.

Mr. S. R. Ballal, Lecturer in the Department of Commerce, has resigned his appointment in order to accept services elsewhere and Mr. B. B. Sen has been appointed in his place.

Dr. Krishnan resigned his office on his appointment as Mohendralal Sircar Research Professor at the Indian Association for the cultivation of Science, Calcutta, and in his place Dr. Kedareswar Banerjee has been appointed as a Reader in Physics.

Mr. Momtazuddin Ahmed, Lecturer in Philosophy, and Mr. Serajul Haq, Lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies left for England last year on study leave. Both have joined the University of London and are preparing for Doctorate degrees. A former student of this University and a Lytton scholar has been appointed in place of Mr. Momtazuddin Ahmed. This year Mr. P. C. Chakravarti of the Department of History is proceeding to England on study leave.

It was stated in 1934 that the University would be prepared to take whatever steps are possible for ensuring that the guidance and supervision provided for women students of the University are as satisfactory as possible and it was therefore resolved that whenever possible an attempt should be made to obtain the services of one or more suitable women teachers. In pursuance of this policy and in view of the increase in the number of women students, a distinguished student of this University, Miss Karunakana Gupta, has been appointed a Lecturer in History in the chain of arrangements on account of the study leave of a teacher of that Department.

I should also mention that Dr. Farimal Roy, Lecturer in the Department of Economics and Politics, has been appointed Principal of the Government Commercial Institute at Calcutta.

Though the Economic depression still continues, the number of admissions last session to the University was fairly satisfactory. The number on the 31st March 1936, was 1,021, including 46 women students. This is slightly higher than the number of the previous session. In the faculties of Arts and Science there has been a steady increase of students; in the Faculty of Law there has been a fall. The number of Honours and Post-graduate students has been well maintained; in fact it is higher and the number of advanced students of all types is equal to the number of previous sessions. It is yet early to speak about the admissions this year; in view of the economic depression in the country, no large increase in numbers is anticipated.

The high academic standard of the University has been ably maintained. The quality and volume of research work will be evident from the Annual Report of the University and members of the staff and students have obtained high distinctions. Professor J. N. Das Gupta, Dean of the Faculty of Law, has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Law by the University of Calcutta, and two students—Fareesh Chandra Dutt and Pulin Behari Sarkar have been awarded the degree of Doctor of Science by this University. The percentage of success of students in the various examinations has also been well maintained and the academic societies of the University have shown commendable activity by frequent meetings and the discussion of papers that have attracted considerable public attention. Tours of educational interest for advanced students of politics, Commerce and Physics were organised and such facilities were greatly appreciated.

The nineteenth Session of the All-India Economic Conference under the Presidency of Mr. Mohan Lal met at Dacca this year under the auspices of the University. The Hon'ble Minister for Education opened the Conference and took an active part in its deliberations. Every arrangement was made for the accommodation and comfort of the many delegates who arrived from all parts of India. Our appeal to the public at Dacca for funds to meet the expenses of the Conference met with a gratifying response and I take this opportunity of thanking all those who contributed so handsomely.



One special feature of the University is its residential organization that aims at the promotion of sound traditions of corporate life among students and I am happy to record that the Halls under able and sympathetic guidance have continued to make steady progress in that direction. The annual gatherings of past and present students have evoked warm enthusiasm and it has been particularly gratifying to note the feelings of loyalty and affection among old students for the institution that has given them of their best.

The work of the University was carried on last session undisturbed by any political movements. It should be mentioned here that last session owing to the prevalence of small-pox in an epidemic form in the town of Dacca, the University on the advice of the Municipality Health Officer and the Civil Surgeon began its long vacation from the 1st March, and the B.A. and B.Sc. Honours Examinations were postponed till June.

The financial position of the University is causing us considerable anxiety. We convey our thanks to Government for an additional grant of Rs. 10,000 for this session, but we have not been encouraged to believe that our application for an increased grant will receive further consideration. We maintain, and this has been conveyed to Government—that as a result of the recommendations of Committees set up from time to time by the University, all possible economies that could be effected without seriously impairing the efficiency of the University and frustrating the objects for which this institution was created have been made, and that an additional grant is required to discharge efficiently our existing obligations. We appreciate the financial difficulties of Government at the present moment, but we submit that it is also a responsibility of Government to maintain this Institution at a certain level of efficiency. The Government of Bengal is concerned as vitally as are the authorities of the University with the objects for which this Institution was created and we appeal to Government to give us financial assistance to ensure a reasonable chance of their fulfilment.

The University's application for a grant for opening a Department of Soil Sciences is still under the consideration of Government. It was mentioned that here in Dacca there are opportunities and facilities for placing skilled knowledge at the service of agriculture and we foresee great developments in this direction. In our Laboratories there has been an output of work of a really high order. Your Excellency was pleased to say last year that "the work that is being done in Agricultural research is a typical example of an activity that may lead to benefits of the very highest order to Bengal" and that "this is one of the subjects on which this University might most appropriately focus its attention." We sincerely trust that our application will receive sympathetic consideration this year. We respectfully submit that if Government is assured that expenditure now on a project will in future increase the material wealth of Bengal, our application is entitled to special consideration.

I take this opportunity of mentioning that the plan of the projected History of Bengal has now been approved by the University and we hope that the first batch of contributions from scholars who are collaborating in its preparation will be received by the end of this year. Our appeal for funds for the necessary expenses has not yet received a favourable response: only a small amount has been received so far but we are persevering in our efforts. I appeal to the generosity of Bengal to help us with funds so that a work of this magnitude may be completed. We are also applying to Government for a grant and we trust that the Government of Bengal will make a suitable contribution for an authoritative History of Bengal.

#### GRADUATES OF THIS UNIVERSITY

To those who have received Degrees and Prizes to-day I offer cordial congratulations on behalf of the University. I share with you your joy and I pray that this promise of to-day may be amply fulfilled in the future. The degrees of a University are the symbols of your inner qualities and I hope that the teaching and training you have received here in the class rooms, playing fields and halls of residence have equipped you with qualities to meet every situation in life. Many of you would soon be leaving the University to fight the harder battles of life; I am aware of the difficulties but I should like to remind that on no account should you be disappointed or allow the inner purpose of your life to be overwhelmed by the bitterness of temporary failures. In a sense, you are passing the threshold of a new era. As a result of vast changes, there is emerging a new form of common sense and

and a new conception of the duties that demand public spirit and personal self-sacrifice and greater calls will be made on you to realise your ideals of citizenship. It is not enough to have good intentions, fine ideals and noble aims; it is not enough to be honest and just. You have also to possess the ability to win the confidence and goodwill of the people among whom you live and work; and when you know how to get on with other people, you have mastered one of the great secrets of life. In that sense Politics may be said to be a branch of the art of getting on with other people. I mention politics because I feel that every man will have to take an interest in politics because he has an interest in the management of the community in which he lives. You will agree with me that many of the ills from which we suffer to-day are due to the absence of understanding and agreement about the end of our Politics. We tend to become wholly occupied with the form of institutions with votes, elections, separate representation—and forget the purposes for which Politics exist. What is required of you, from educated men, is, that the underlying ideas of Politics should be stated free from prejudice and outworn terminology and a sufficient number of men should arrive at an agreement about the aims. With the possibility of agreement our Politics would be raised to a higher level. All the argument is about words; and terms and phrases like "Capital", "Labour", "Socialism", "Communism" provide the armaments of political conflict and keep men apart. The realities that underlie them are ignored. The duty of all of us is first of all to put ourselves right and then help democracy; that is help others to use their minds so as to end the unconsciousness in which they pass their lives and become fully conscious of their natures and powers. It is in this sphere that your education is of value to you—the education that develops the latent consciousness in you. It has been rightly said "True democracy is not an external Government but an inward rule." The democracy of the heart has to be developed before we get democracy fulfilled in practice. Much of the disorganisation of our time cannot be remedied without suffering but if we continue to look at it with loathing and hatred, or fear and pain, are we likely to be able to put it right? We shall need other feelings than those. We shall need faith and love and an ideal of the future. Above all we need to get rid of our personal interests however innocent they may be. We have to maintain a consistent aim, which is to realise in our own lives the best of which they are capable, to increase their creativeness, energy and usefulness and to endeavour to make the good life, that is the same quality of life as we desire for ourselves, available to all. Inner contacts with others must be cultivated in which no separate interests are recognised. There may be obstacles to this understanding, but we should help to remove them by removing obstacles from our own way of thinking. A good society must have strong foundations and such foundations can be found only in the inner integrity of individuals that compose it. I have said all these things because you are the architects of your community and because you will be faced with these problems where the right mental attitude is supremely necessary. And your education should be regarded in that light, not merely the acquiring of information but of technique. An educated person is one who has the right mental habits; who recognises that we are what we are not merely by the quality of our thoughts, but by our control over them. There is just one other thing that I should mention. One of the greatest troubles of the mind is fear and many people pass their lives pursued by phantoms that make their lives a misery to them. Fear of ill-health, of what others think of them, of a thousand other things disturb their happiness. Create a mental picture of your ideals, see yourself succeeding cheerfully facing the day and your energy will flow into the channels of success. Whatever you undertake, dedicate your work to your highest ideals, to your higher selves, and make it a symbol of your inner life. Joy comes not merely when our work is what we want it to be, but when we make it expressive of our aspirations. Your soul gives significance to the simplest and humblest act. I wish you every success in your new duties and responsibilities and may Providence guide you.

**Mr Jadunath Sarkar's Address**

The following is the text of the Convocation Address by *Sir Jadunath Sarkar* :—  
Your Excellency, Mr. Vice-Chancellor and members of the Dacca University, among whom I have the honour to count myself one from to-day.—I greatly appreciate the privilege you have given me of addressing the present Convocation, and I cannot make a better use of it than by expressing on the new graduates what I believe ought to be their proper attitude towards this seat of learning, now that they are going out of its sheltering arms.

The region of which Dacca is the centre has played a memorable part in the life of Bengal from the earliest known age of our history, and taken no small share in the special contributions made by our province to the religion, culture and art of India as a whole and even of some lands beyond our natural frontiers.

In the far-off Hindu period, East Bengal was a centre of the highest Sanskrit learning; teachers and writers from these districts attained to supreme eminence among the Hindus and Budhists alike. It was also the nursery of the Tantric school of theology which was a common meeting ground of Hinduism, later Budhism. It was a leading seat of Hindu medical lore and practice, as it has continued to be down to our own days. Even in the Muhammadan Period, we have it on record that the highest officers of the Mughal empire posted in this province used to put themselves under treatment of the local *Kavirajes*.

Under Muslim rule, Dacca's fame was spread beyond the provincial bounds by its arts and crafts, the most notable among which were muslin fabrics, ivory work, shell bangle carving, and silver jewellery and filigree work.

Thirteen hundred years ago, the greatest teacher at the University of Nalanda was Shilabhadra, who had been born in a Brahman family of the tract South of Dacca. This master of the sacred lore had publicly defeated an all-conquering South Indian pandit and thus established his position as the champion scholar of all India. The whole country honoured and obeyed him. The famous Chinese Budhist pilgrim Yuan Chwang chose him as his teacher. Four hundred years after him, another son of East Bengal Dipankar Srijnan, born at Vikramanipur, went to Tibet to reform Budhism there and enrich the literature of that country with translations from Sanskrit works. From Chittagong came yet another spiritual guide of the Tibetans, named Nalapa, the guru and teacher of the famous missionary and prolific theological writer Marpa.

Such were the great men that East Bengal produced in those early times. But even more valuable than the scholarship and artistic skill developed in this land was the character of its people, which the acute Chinese observer describes thus:—"The climate is soft. The men are hardy by nature and small of stature.....They are fond of learning and exercise themselves diligently in the acquisition of it." He illustrates their ideal of plain living and high thinking by quoting the following reply of this Shilabhadra when refusing the rich gifts of a king of Bihar: "A master of the Shastras who wears the yellow robe of religion, knows how to be contented with little and to keep himself pure."

This racial character of the people of East Bengal received a further enrichment from history. Due to its geographical position, this part of our province witnessed in the Muslim period a great mingling of races and cultures, probably unequalled by any other part of India. Those enormous arteries of inland navigation, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, as well as the ocean highway, have met together here, and poured into this land the Mongoloids of the north and the east Arabs, Turks, Afghans, Persians and Abyssinians, from the Islamic west, Panjabi Khatrias, Hindustani writers, Rajput warriors and Portuguese traders and pirates, many of whom have taken root in the soil. In consequence of this, Dacca like the ports of Athens and Alexandria, has enjoyed a richly diversified life, which has developed a remarkable openness of its people's mind to light. In the present age the sons of East Bengal have set an example to the other people of Bengal by their readiness to receive new ideas, their forward-looking spirit which breaks through age-old social conventions and blind traditions, and their power of readily adapting themselves to new environments.

Great as have been the achievements of your ancestors in the past, Dacca in modern times has been no home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs; it has not continued to dream the vanished dreams of the Buddhistic or Nawabi age. On the contrary, in the modern age the sons of East Bengal have been foremost in social reform, in the spirit of enterprise, in adventure and pioneer work. They have not been behind any other people of India in taking advantage of that opening of career to talent which has been one of the highest gifts of British rule. You no longer send teachers and monastic organisers to Tibet, but East Bengal men have been found doing useful public work from Yun-nan on the Chinese frontier to Dushlap on the South Persian line. Students hailing from East Bengal have been known in every school that they have joined, by their gift, patient industry, devotion to work, and simplicity of life. The spirit of Shilabhadra is not dead in this land. Dacca Pandits still continue the noble tradition of plain living and high thinking

set by their forefathers, and Dacca students still supply the best examples seen in India of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties.

This character is a priceless asset to you; it is a noble heritage. But nobility of birth entails obligations. Many years ago it was my duty to show Sir Bhankaran Nair over the Buddhist antiquities at Sarnath. After visiting them he remarked, "These things make me sad. I feel that we modern Hindus are very unworthy children of the race of ancient Indians who made such master-pieces of the sculptor's art.

That is the spirit which should animate a man in contemplating the glorious historic past of his race. Graduates of the Dacca University, as trustees of the ancient fame of your country, it is your bounden duty to maintain the high standard of scholarship for which East Bengal has been famous since the earliest Hindu or Buddhist times. Your forefathers did not pass on fools into the world by stamping them with the hall-mark of pandits; they themselves mastered knowledge fully and they insisted on their pupils acquiring genuine knowledge. I have known all your Vice-Chancellors since the foundation of this University, and I can tell you how anxious they have always been to make the degrees of your University a real indication of merit and not a deceptive show. In this work of maintaining the true honour of your *alma mater* every student can contribute his share by honest industry, by eager search for truth, and by appreciating the pure metal instead of hankering after the mere stamp of a debased coin.

There is a still harder task before the sons of the Dacca University who wish to be worthy of this great centre of learning. Your University ought to focus within itself all the intellectual and moral energies of East Bengal. Its graduates owe it to their *alma mater* to be leaders of men in this province in the fields of thought and action alike. The true function of a University is not to send forth mere technicians or narrow specialists blind to the rest of the universe,—but leaders who can view a problem as a whole and guide and co-ordinate the work of subordinate instruments. Nowhere is the domination of this liberal, truth-seeking, University-trained mind more necessary than in the India of to-day. At no time probably have seductive half-truths and false doctrines about society economics and politics caused more harm than in our land in this age. We are living in a world threatened by cunningly engineered mob passions, political heresies and selfish propaganda. Our unlettered or ill-educated masses form the readiest dupes of plausible orators and writers and their deceptive slogans. The true progress,—and even the very life, of our society demands that those who have been blessed with a real University education, those who have acquired the garnered truths of the world's past and formed their characters in this the noblest of all brotherhoods, by fighting falsehood in thought, anarchy in the social order, and passion and folly in the life of the community,—regardless of personal loss.

To this duty the University calls her sons. Apply your knowledge to life. For, the supreme test of learning is action. The perfect scholar is no recluse, no book-worm; he must be the militant champion of truth, a St. George ever ready to slay the dragon of falsehood in society and the State. The great Persian poet truly said some eight centuries ago—

*Ilm ke chandan khurani,  
Chun 'ami dar tu nist, nadani.*

"However much books you may have read,  
If you are found wanting in practice, you are  
no better than a fool."

Therefore, stand forth as what you are best fitted to be, as centres of social co-operation, as a dynamic force helping the true evolution of our civilisation and government, as the supreme agents of progress and modernisation in the life of our people, and thus help, as no other class of men can, to bring nearer that New India which we are all so wistfully looking forward to and which is every true patriot's dream.

# The Andhra University Convocation

10th. Convocation—Waltair—24th. August 1936

The following is the text of the address, delivered by the Vice-Chancellor, Mr. C. R. Reddy, to the graduates admitted to the degrees at the 10th Convocation of the Andhra University held at Waltair on the 24th. August 1936.

## Vice-Chancellor's Address

*Mr. Chancellor, Senators, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

This is a unique occasion. The Andhra Convocation meets under the presidency of an Andhra Chancellor! In commemoration of this event the University greets you, Mr. Chancellor, at the threshold with the garland of an Honorary Degree, which you have kindly agreed to accept.

I heartily welcome our Pro-Chancellor, the Rajah of Bobbili, back to his home and duties here after his recent holiday in England. I hope he has benefited by the change and has come back refreshed in body and mind.

My successor-predecessor, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, resigned the Vice-Chancellorship of this University on his appointment to a position of commanding significance as the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford. He has been elected to a Fellowship of one of the Colleges there, and in other ways has achieved unprecedented distinctions, which reflect added lustre on the Andhra University. There is no need to dwell on the services rendered by him to our University. They are well-known and constitute a memorable period.

Perhaps, I may be pardoned if I strike a personal note and say that I feel it a great happiness to be here once again, reunited to my beloved Andhra University, after a long period of separation, in which my thoughts and feelings were never absent from her, and she too, I am proud and grateful to acknowledge, as the election showed, was not in her generosity unmindful of my humble devotion and services.

The form of the University could be achieved without finance, and that we achieved while we were at Bezvada. But the substance of education which is to give body and life to that form cannot be achieved without ample finance. And therefore, addressing the Andhra Convocation in this hour of reunited joy, I cannot but greet with the deepest emotion the splendour of the exemplary donation of the Maharajah Sahab of Jeypore, whose name will shine, large and luminous, in letters of gold in the history of University education in India.

I am glad to be able to announce that the Maharaja Sahab of Parlakimedi has raised his College, till now Second Grade, to a First Grade institution. His College is the only one in which Agriculture figures as one of the optionals in the Intermediate. And I am given to understand that the Maharaja Sahab is contemplating to introduce Agriculture in the B. A. also. If this is done, it will mark a very important advance worthy of imitation by other Colleges.

Natural Sciences have not received the attention due to them in the Andhra area. It is to the credit of the Maharaja Sahab of Pithapur, an illustrious patron of letters and learning, that his College provides instruction in Natural Sciences in the B. Sc. Pass course, with Botany as the Main and Zoology as a Subsidiary subject. I appeal to the generosity of the Maharajah Sahab to introduce the other variation also, namely, Zoology as the main and Botany as a subsidiary subject. It is distressing to have to add that Geology finds no place in any of the Colleges in the Andhra Desa. The organisation of Natural Sciences at the headquarters is one of our first needs, and I trust that Government will give us a block grant for this purpose.

The Executive Engineer, Visagapatam, reports that the building in which the office is now located and where the Syndicate meets, is not safe and should be demolished. The construction of a combined Convocation Hall and Administrative Offices can no longer be postponed, unless Government are going to be indifferent to the lives of the Vice-Chancellor and his colleagues.

We have completed the construction of an additional kitchen for the hostel and a dispensary.

The recommendations of the Indian Medical Council regarding the Andhra Medical Council College are receiving adequate attention at the hands of the authorities, and

we are grateful to the Government for the undertaking given to develop it to the requisite degree and for obtaining from the Legislative Council the necessary money grants. If it is not an impertinence to say so, I would like the name "The Medical College, Vizagapatam" to be changed into "The Andhra Medical College, Vizagapatam". For the Rajah Sahib of Panagal, the noble founder of the College, wanted it to be a provincial and not a municipal institution either in name or in reality. But, however, a more important point is the recognition of our Medical Degrees by the Indian Medical Council. I have recently appealed to my Hon'ble friend the Minister for Education, to exert his utmost to secure this recognition at the forthcoming meeting of the Council in November.

Our tallest man of Science—and one of the tallest in the World—Sir C. V. Raman, has undertaken to give a donation of Rs. 100 a month for two Research Scholarships of Rs. 50 each, tenable in the Physics Department. The University is very grateful to Sir C. V. Raman for this benefaction.

The Campus occupied by the University is but 53 acres. Already the buildings look huddled together and crowded. 500 acres is nearer what we need. The Syndicate is contemplating purchasing a few contiguous properties. Here again, unless the Government sheds its kindly light on us, our darkness cannot be relieved.

Two years ago, the University submitted comprehensive proposals for amending the Andhra University Act. And latterly a reply was received to the effect that Government were not prepared to take action at present. I may say without entering into details that the time has come when a comprehensive revision has to be made. The Andhra University is a new type of University. Up to the level of Pass courses, it is an affiliating University. For all higher branches of study, namely, Honours and Post-Graduate courses, covering the M. A. and Doctorate Degrees, it is intended to be a unitary, teaching, residential University. And as our functions as a teaching University grow, some of the inner contradictions reveal themselves, and they will have to be reconciled in a few synthesis, both legislative and administrative. The Syndicate is turning its attention to this matter. Government can help us here readily, because we won't ask them any moneys.

The Syndicate has appointed a Sub-Committee to plan out a Development Programme and work out roughly, on the basis of empirical calculations, the cost involved. A comprehensive plan will enable us to co-ordinate our activities better and take them in the order of importance and urgency. Otherwise, there will be too many disjointed interjections and no sentence.

There is no need to point out that a large number of departments essential to a University organisation have yet to be created—to mention just two instances, Natural Sciences, and a hostel for Girl students. I am told that no girls are admitted into the Medical College, because there is no proper residence organised for them; and of course no residence has been organised because none have been admitted. On occasions like this a Vice-Chancellor has to enact the 'Boggar's Opera' and appeal to Government, to the landed aristocracy, and the Merchant Princes for generous financial assistance.

I dearly wish to see the Ceded Districts re-united to the Andhra University. The cultural integrity of the Andhra Desa must be the common concern and ambition of all Andhra hearts.

This young University requires to be generously supported by Government, it is not to remain a nominal aspiration on the Statute book. On a rough calculation, we would want about 18 lakhs non-recurring and 3 lakhs of recurring grants. If this much is granted, we need not approach Government, as far as present calculations go, for the next quarter of a century. We have been running the University on very economical lines, contenting ourselves for the present with teachers of no higher grade than Readers. We have to provide not only for new departments of study, indispensable to University organisation, but for the inevitable increases in expenditure on staff and other incidents of the future. The sum I have stated would be regarded as an exceedingly modest one, when it is understood that the Andhra University is a Presidency College and an affiliating University rolled into one.

Dr. H. Parameswaran has installed his great clock in the tower of the Jeypore Maharajah's Science College. It is the crown of the University buildings—a Swadeshi Crown. On a rough estimate, the cost—these figures cannot be quite accurate at this stage—comes to about Rs. 6,000. Of this amount, the main portion—not less than Rs. 4,000—goes to benefit our own country in the shape of wages of labour, supervision, etc. I am told that an imported foreign clock of the same type costs only Rs. 20,000. The University is indebted to Dr. Parameswaran for this

beneaction, for beneaction it is to the tune of at least Rs. 10,000, and to the Government and the authorities of the Education Department and of the Presidency College for giving him permission to undertake this manufacture in his laboratory.

Nothing can be more gratifying to me personally or more deserving of credit from the point of view of the great ideals of the University and the aspirations of the country than the excellent output of research work done by the members of the University staff. The Appendix to this address is evidence that both in quality and quantity this infant University, consisting mainly of young teachers possessing high qualifications and purpose and zeal, is taking commendable long and firm strides forward. It is my good fortune that in the evening of my life the darkening sky is being illumined by the company of so many stars. Yet we must not feel elated or even satisfied. All that has been done is but an introduction, and not even that in full. The big text has yet to be written or rather compiled. I am confident that working in hearty co-operation with each other and co-ordinating their efforts in the true spirit of University fraternity, our teachers will achieve results of impressive value to our Motherland and emulate the glories of Western Universities both in life and in culture.

I am glad that we have been able to secure the Hon'ble Diwan Bahadur S. Kumaraswami Reddy as the Reader of the Convocation address this year.

With apologies for standing so long between you and the Hon'ble the Minister for Education whom you are eager to hear, I now resume my seat.

#### Mr. Kumaraswami Reddiar's Convocation Address

The following is the Convocation Address of the Hon'ble Diwan Bahadur S. Kumaraswami Reddiar, Minister of Education :—

#### *Mr. Chancellor, Graduates of the University, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am deeply thankful to His Excellency for his gracious invitation to me to deliver this Convocation Address. In the course of its short but eventful career, the Andhra University has had the pleasure and profit of listening to some of India's greatest sons, including His Excellency the present Chancellor, and I consider it a high honour indeed to be called upon to follow in their foot-steps. The present occasion is exceptional, if not unique, in the history of the Andhra University, as it brings together, in the person of the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Speaker at the Convocation, three genuine Andhras from three distant parts of South India, and serves as a significant symbol of the penetrating power of Andhra culture and of the far-flung enterprise of the Andhra people.

It is, too, a rare privilege for one like me to escape, once in a way, from the dust and din of politics and the dull, stifling details of administration; and, seated high where 'Man has raised His Wisdom like the watch-tower of a town', to breathe the purer air of academic freedom and view all things with calm, unearer eyes.

Graduates of the year, by the solemn and splendid ceremonial we have just witnessed, you have been admitted by the Andhra University to the brother-hood of its *scissures*; and before I proceed to discharge the statutory duty of exhorting you to conduct yourselves suitably to the new and honourable status that you have attained, let me have the pleasure of congratulating you on the degrees and titles that you have received at the hands of the first Andhra Chancellor of the Andhra University.

The Andhra University is the sturdy off-spring of the University reform movement inaugurated by Lord Curzon and strengthened and intensified by Sir Asutosh Mukherjee. The unregenerate London University of a century ago—a glorified board of examiners—was the pernicious model on which the elder Indian Universities were set up, and, as His Excellency the present Chancellor bewailed two years ago, they were "the weak offspring of an imperfect mother". They did no direct teaching and no research and their sole encounter with the youth of the land was on the dark, uneven field of examinations. Your University to-day teaches all its Honours students and carries on important and fruitful research work in various Arts and Sciences, in addition to discharging the affiliative functions which it took over from Madras.

You have been fortunate, too, in your teachers, most of whom are brilliant young men, whose life and learning are not only an inspiration and example to you, but are creating for the Andhra University a tradition of scholarship and corporate academic action which transcends buildings and books and is indeed the precious life-blood of your *alma mater* and a gift to her of a life beyond life. In congratulating you,

therefore, on becoming graduates of the Andhra University, I am by no means repeating an empty formula.

On an occasion like this, when you have reached a summit in your career and are disposed to look ahead as well as take stock of past achievement it will be impossible for you to ignore and callous of me to minimise the gravity of the situation that now awaits you. Changes, political and economic, loom gigantic in the life of our country, and formidable struggles are afoot between clashing sets of ideas; and whether you like it or not, you will have to step out of your sheltered existence and choose your side, and take your place, amidst these "confused alarms of struggle and flight". Difficult as the choice may be and depressing the prospects of your position in public life, your lot in private life may be even less agreeable; some of you are no doubt haunted even now by the spectre of unemployment and many will be fated to take up uncongenial employment or inadequately paid employment.

The causes of our troubles are to be sought in India's poverty and over-population, its primitive social structure and industrial organisation and, one must now add, the world-wide fall in agricultural prices. While I sympathise with you in this predicament, and would give you, if I may, some courage and comfort, I am not one of those who trace these mighty and terrible forces to the kind of education that you have received.

To require a University not merely to disseminate and increase knowledge, but also to find jobs for its graduates, is to place on it 'an alien and quite impossible burden'. The functions of the University are complex and difficult enough already and are not yet adequately performed; the training of the mind and of the body is its proper sphere, while industrialisation, rural improvement, monetary reform, large schemes of mass education and the like undertakings, which alone will create employment, must be initiated and maintained by the State or other institutions, not by the Universities. Of course, the University can and should study these problems and programmes and give suggestions and guidance both to the public and its own *alumni*; but the actual working of those policies and programmes must be in quite other hands.

In spite of these obvious truths, thus often clearly stated, many economists, politicians and educationists themselves have condemned our Universities as though they were operative causes of unemployment and rebuked our graduates for having wantonly wasted their parents' substance and their own time and energy in pursuit of the *ignis fatuus* of a degree. I do not wish you to yield to such gloomy and remorseful thoughts. On the contrary, I would fain convince you that your life at the University has been a happy and profitable time, that you have here received a wide and full training to become 'high-minded public servants, disinterested politicians and workers, and leaders and citizens of the best type', that most of you have been equipped, and are eager, to do work in the world that is well worth doing, to serve truth and your fellowmen, and that, given a chance to live over again the last four or five years, you would cheerfully and precisely repeat what you have done.

Having so recently passed through a formal and external examination, it may not be amiss for each of you to conduct a frank and intimate self-examination:—"Have I gained anything mentally, morally and physically by my College course? Am I any better to-day than I was four or five years ago when I just left school? Did the University offer me facilities for increasing my knowledge, for widening my interests, for refining my tastes, for enriching my emotions, for training my body, for learning to live with my fellows as a willing and useful member of society? Did I make full use of these various facilities for self-education thrust on me by the University?"

In most cases, I have no doubt, the result of this introspective inquiry will be: "I am clearly and substantially the gainer." Even where the answer is not so definite or so emphatic, the blame for the failure will lie on the individual rather than on the institution, on the horse that averted his head, not on the tank full of clear, sweet water. For whatever a college may offer, enforce or attempt, the first and last word in education must rest with the individual student; all education, and more especially higher education, is ultimately self-education. A college, in the words of Mr. Stanley Baldwin, "can provide a favourable soil for the developing of intelligence under the supervision of expert gardeners, but it cannot grow figs from thistles."

While thus the University *vis-à-vis* the individual student emerges blameless, its service to the State and society in the training of officials and leaders, of doctors and teachers, and in the creation of the modern outlook, deserves better recognition than it has received so far. I shall not weary you or offend you by the citation of names, but you cannot mention any Indian who during the last one hundred years has done



his country some public service without having received, and received in ample measure, the benefits of modern education. In criticising and condemning, as we often do, not a defect here or a weakness there, but the system as a whole, let us remember this : and remember also that the perfect system of education (like other perfect things) is perhaps laid up in heaven, but is unattainable on earth.

I grant that many changes are urgently called for in the methods and some in the content of the education imparted in our schools and colleges ; and yet I cannot sympathise with the destructive fury of those who would sweep altogether the present system of education in favour of what they passionately but vaguely describe as 'national education.' Whatever changes we wish to make in the organisation and conduct of our schools and colleges and in the methods and content of our teaching, we are even now at perfect liberty to carry out ; and if we do not replace, throughout the educational field, the teaching, for example, of science by the teaching of grammar or disputation or of poetry in an ancient language, it is not because the Government or some other sinister force is preventing us, but simply because the people, the Indian men and women, who are responsible for Indian Education do not think that the changes can be made without serious loss.

The whole aim of this modern education is in the words of Mr. Baldwin, to enable the student "to learn habits of accuracy in measurement, precision in statement, honesty in handling evidence, fairness in presenting a cause, in a word, to be true in word and deed. Principles are constantly being subjected to the test of fact, purified in the furnace of experiments...By means of this discipline you learn that things are what they are and the consequences will be what they will be."

The replacement of authority, whether personal or traditional, by the findings of one's own senses, and by inferences based on one's own reason, this is the difference, not indeed between eastern and western education, but the difference between medieval and modern education. The difference can be put in another way also ; medieval education whether in Europe or in India, was pre-occupied with the condition of the soul and the affairs of a future supramundane world ; whereas modern education, whether in the east or the west, is concerned with the things we know and with the happiness of individuals and of society in this world. From the point of view of the individual as well as of society, this change has been of the utmost value and cannot now be given up or retraced. If to-day the great Indian scientist, Sir J. C. Bose, declares "nothing can be so destructive of originality as blind acceptance of authoritative statements : it is only from a burning candle that others can be lighted" ; if in our thought the emphasis has shifted from obedience to independence, from fear of tyranny to love of freedom, from callousness and indifference to passion for justice and hatred of oppression, from obscurantism to rationalism, the change is due chiefly to the scientific and democratic outlook which has been communicated to some of us by our 'modern education.' What is now required is not a restriction, but an intensification and fulfilment, of this education ; the spread, through the vernacular medium, of this practical and critical attitude and this secular mental discipline to all our people. I may repeat here that this education is neither eastern nor western, but a blend of the best of both.

If this mingling of cultures is to succeed and the national mind to be enriched by the healthy assimilation of foreign elements, the first condition is the continued virility of the indigenous culture. It is only on a live plant that we can graft a fresh stock and hope to secure a *tertium quid* combining the better qualities of the parents, and not a weak and pale intimation of the imported article. The best scientists, philosophers and statesmen of India owe, no doubt, a great debt to the west, but they are not 'mock Englishmen' or Europeans. They are no more English than Keats was Greek, or Matthew Arnold was French, or Max Muller was Indian. It is along this 'Middle Way' that our cultural progress should proceed to its fulfilment.

It is recognised all over the world that "obviously every educated man should possess at least one other language beside his own, if only for the intellectual training of making his thought clear by translation."

While the change of medium into the mothertongue is a reform urgent and necessary and should precede every other educational reform, we may be thankful that historical causes have forced on us the use of English, which is virtually the *lingua franca* of the civilised world.

English was brought in purely on practical and administrative grounds, but it has served a high and necessary cultural and educational purpose. Most political, social and even religious movements in modern India have received their original inspiration

as well as their continual refreshment from our study of English ; and English has brought to us, and can alone maintain for us, a close and living contact with modern science and European thought. The study of English as a second language should remain a compulsory part of our higher education, if our cultural life is not to suffer tragic impoverishment.

In maintaining academic standards, in preserving the qualities of relevancy, accuracy, thoroughness, fairness and aesthetic fitness in all our academic dealings, in testing and estimating the work of our historians and scientist, we have in English works a steady standard of reference and basis of comparison, and in the English language a medium, which keep us in constant touch with the intellectual activities of Europe, America and Japan.

At the same time it cannot be denied that the enormous and dangerous gap that now yawns between the University and national life, that which makes our educational system appear anything but national, is the direct outcome of the use of English as the medium of education. "We have purchased spectacles at the price of our eyesight," says one thinker. "We are raising oak trees on one-inch depth of soil," says another. These are no doubt exaggerations, but they are the exaggerations of a truth.

"The purpose of education," we are assured by philosophers, "is to teach us how to be in love always and what to be in love with. The great things of history have been done by the great lovers, by the saints and men of science...Without passion nothing great can be achieved..."

"It is the hunger and thirst after knowledge—for her own sake, because of the charm and beauty of her—that makes the true student. The true student must be true lover."

If this passionate love of learning and this fine enthusiasm for fine things have not been kindled in our young men and women, the chief cause of this failure is to be found in the obscurity, the difficulty, and the utter unready of the medium through which knowledge and feeling come to them. If our universities are to escape the cold isolation in which they are now functioning and to become real organs of the commonwealth, receiving and imparting the warm blood of national life, they can only do so by adopting the natural medium of the mother-tongue. The great problem that faces Indian Universities to-day, a problem which is complex but will brook no delay, is this : how to square the demands of the individual and the mother-tongue, on the one hand, with unimpaired preservation of highest academic standards of study, teaching and research, on the other. In the solution of this problem, in the transition, without loss of efficiency, from English to Telugu as the medium of our highest thought and feeling, this University is taking and will, under the guidance of its scholarly Vice-Chancellor and teachers, continue to take the leading part. By the award of prizes and the encouragement of publications and in various other ways, the authorities of the University are rapidly bringing nearer the day when all the teaching and research in Andhradesa will be conducted through the medium of Telugu and the specific provision in this behalf in your University Act will be fulfilled. Till that day comes, the tide of the University will belong to it only as a matter of courtesy ; and its existence can be justified on administrative, but not on cultural, grounds.

The complaint usually levelled against Indian Universities that they are too literary, and contribute nothing of practical utility to the industrial and social life of the country, is not wholly true as against this University. You have the usual teachers' training and medical courses ; your Medical College will, I hope, finally triumph in 'the battle of the standards'. In addition to these, you have already an Honours Course in Technology with special reference to the sugar industry. As His Excellency Sir George Stanley observed in laying the foundation stone of the Jeypore Vikrama Deo College of Science and Technology, "for India to attain her due place in the comity of nations, modern conditions demand that her nascent industries should be fostered and new ones developed and it is appropriate that your new University should commence its building programme with a College in which modern industrial problems can be studied and from which its students can go out to give to the service of Indian industry the benefit of the knowledge they have gained." Part of your research in History and Economics has had some bearing on questions of local and topical interest. The province looks to your researchers to give a lead in the solution of its many economic, industrial and social problems.

Reform in this direction as in every other must be gradual and well-considered. Desirable as technical education and sociological research are, they should not run

too far ahead of the needs and activities of the people and they should bear some relation to the intellectual standards appropriate to a University. We do not wish our University to borrow whole-sale from American Universities their strenuous courses on the "Principles of Advertising", "Practical poultry-raising" and "Cookery—Fundamental processes", or to grant Doctorate degrees for theses on "Baying women's garments by mail" and "A Time and Motion Comparison on four methods of Dish Washing". As local conditions demand, and perhaps in anticipation of such demand, facilities of applied science in its various branches, of commerce and the social sciences, may be opened. But little progress need be expected in correlating the University courses to national life until the work of the University is all done in the language of the place and the common man feels his kinship with the University, its teachers and students.

Apart from instruction and research in social problems, the University and its colleges can do much, by their rules of residence and corporate life, to abolish the distinctions between different creeds and castes. The University should send out young men and young women trained and determined to rid India of the evil of communal feeling. Social equality—the one thing necessary for the unity of India—can be achieved in practice, if only our hostels refuse recognition, in boarding or lodging, to caste and communal differences. Separate caste-hostels and separate caste-kitchens are the very negation of the University idea and a standing obstruction to the achievement of Indian unity. Their abolition is the primary duty which our colleges, as social organisms, owe to the country.

While on the subject of the defects of our colleges, it is perhaps permissible to complain that our academic standards have shown of late a steady downward tendency. The main reason, it seems to me, of this fall is the admission into colleges of too many students who are ill-fitted for University study. Colleges should cease to think in terms of numbers and fee income and pay increasing attention to quality. While incompetence is sternly discouraged, true talent, wherever found, whether among the rich or the poor, should receive full scope for its development; every young person who is likely to achieve high scholarship has a natural and moral right to a complete education. It is in the interest of the country and of knowledge itself that he should have this complete education, not limited by his financial capacity but only by his active interest and his mental fitness. A recent estimate puts the free places at 42 per cent of the total number of places at the English Universities. To the intellectually deserving, the avenues of approach to University education should be widened by a similar generous supply of scholarships. Proportionately to the population, there are not more students in the Universities of India than in those of other civilised countries. Our efforts should now be to provide as well as to restrict, admission to candidates of merit and promise from all classes; and further to make the courses of study fresher, more varied and more realistic and to provide for better and closer personal relations between tutor and pupil and between the pupils inter se.

In order to provide scholarships and fellowships and facilities for post graduate research work, as well as to intensify tutorial supervision of all persons in *state* pupilage, and in order to advance the agricultural, industrial and social welfare of the country by the work done at the University, funds are necessary and must be forthcoming in ever-increasing measure from private benefactors. His Excellency the present Chancellor observed in his Address two years ago: "Few Universities have thriven with Government aid alone. We cannot expect our University to be an exception. Let us hope, enlightened patriotism and generous emulation will secure the necessary funds." No doubt, the University has received various endowments, the most notable and praiseworthy of which is the princely benefaction of the Maharajah Sahob of Jeypore, which has enabled the University to realise one of its cherished objects. But there is great need for many such gifts, and many Andhra princes must imitate the Maharaja Sahob of Jeypore, if the research work and technological courses are to go forward satisfactorily and to be followed up as they deserve to be.

Like machinery in industry, the examination in an educational system is a good slave but a very bad master; yet unfortunately in recent years this Frankenstein monster has grown so ferocious and unappeasable that it threatens to destroy what it was called in to serve. Owing to the result of the University Examination being accepted as a passport to Government and almost all other employment, the final examination dominates and controls the whole work of teachers, pupils and administrators at the University; and the collegiate course in its turn dominates and con-

trois the entire field of secondary education in the province. The needs and claims of a small minority thus determine and inevitably pervert the capacities and tastes of a whole great population. The examination system is so thorough in its benumbing effects that the poor student who comes through the series of crises finds at last that energies and character, his initiative, judgment and resources have all been exhausted in the process "and he lies down to rest in an educational sleep" for the rest of his life. Some loosening of the hold of the examinations on the educational system, some correlation between the final results and the work done from day to day at school and college, some community of knowledge and interest between the scholars who examine and the leaders of professions, businesses and the public who supply the University with money as well as human material, some attempt to make the tests more varied, more elastic and better fitted to assess mental power and appreciation of values as well as mere book knowledge, reforms on these lines are urgently called for and will, I hope, be initiated by your progressive University.

Meantime, it may be some consolation to you who have recently undergone and survived the fiery ordeal to reflect on 'the other side' of the case. Obviously, professional examinations are, in the interests of the community, an essential safeguard. Examinations even in non-professional subjects serve as a salutary discipline, converting at least for a while the desultory student into a severe and purposeful scholar, and compelling him to acquire at least the limited fund of knowledge which is the common possession of educated men the whole world over. While, therefore, examinations cast long and depressing shadows both before and after, they are not an unmixed evil and play some part in training the mind of the moral human being.

Addressing the graduates of three years ago, Sir M. Venkatasubba Rao entreated them as members of the *Priesthood* of humanity to start a net-work of social organisations and convert them into agencies of mercy. May I adopt the phrase and the image, and add the warning that you, the Priesthood of these days, will be judged, not by your supposed spiritual sanctity, but by your cultural and social services, eagerly and disinterestedly rendered to your neighbourhood. The filtration of knowledge and of modern ideas and the organisation of a healthy public life, which are among the aims of our educational system, can be fulfilled by you and by none else.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that you, the products of our Universities, owe a duty to your fellowmen. India is still largely a rural and agricultural country and your primary duty is towards the villagers, from whom our educated men have, for far too long a period and to their mutual detriment, been completely divorced. Many of you, I am sure, have villages to go back to and means enough to maintain yourselves there; and such graduates should devote themselves to the all-important work of rural uplift. The educated well-to-do should not, equally with the educated poor, seek paid employment in towns. Some, at least, of you should respond to His Excellency the Viceroy's fervent appeals for an army of rural welfare workers. Not till the educated classes throw themselves, body, mind and soul, into the work of rural welfare, not till then will the economic level of the masses of our people ever be raised. The presence and activities of educated men in our villages must make the countryside more prosperous and attractive and bring about vast and beneficent changes in agricultural methods, cottage industries, co-operation, public health, education, and indeed in every aspect, economic and social, of rural life.

The greatest social service that you can render at the present juncture is, by action and by opinion, to push forward the education of the masses. The work of primary education is not a matter of arithmetical calculation to be measured in terms of the same of money expended. It is not money alone that is required, but human hearts and heads to apply the money intelligently to the work of teaching; you who have received the benefits of higher education can alone supply these hearts and heads.

In liquidating illiteracy and solving the problem of universal education, the mother-tongue as the medium of all education has a part to play which is not inferior in importance to that of administrative compulsion.

Closely connected with and even more baffling than the general problem of compulsion is the unfortunate prevalence of 'Wastage'.

In the last quinquennial review of the progress of education in India, this problem is stated with ordeal, but not more than necessary, frankness. "An impetuous and widespread extension of compulsion will accentuate wastage. Unless a system of compulsion is based on firm foundations, unless the majority of parents are actively in support, unless an ample supply of trained and efficient teachers is available, unless there is careful supervision and a wise distribution of schools, compulsion will do more harm than good."

In our province we are making a dual attack on this evil of 'wastage': first we have extended the legal powers of education authorities so as to include the automatic imposition and direct collection of fines for non-attendance; secondly, having regard to the available funds and educational facilities, we are introducing a system of 'modified compulsion' as a transitional stage between pure 'voluntarism' and flat compulsion, but taking punitive steps in respect of pupils who have begun, but are not disposed to continue, attendance at an elementary school. How far this experiment will succeed remains to be seen, but we are hoping that its results will be useful to others as well as to us in Madras in tackling this all-India problem of wastage. The system has, at any rate, evoked wide-spread interest and is being actively considered in some other provinces. And it has been deliberately conceived as a step forward in the direction of compulsory education for all.

The movement for permanent literacy among the masses, and even more important reform of spreading literacy among the women of our province, can gain momentum only if educated public opinion is actively in favour. The need for this active public opinion felt at all times and in all places, the need for the educated man persuading, converting and transforming his fellowmen, is most urgent in the almost tragic conditions, political, social and economic, of our country and generation. And in the multiplicity of counsels, one may perhaps be singled out as worthy of your immediate attention.

In tackling the at present acute, but by no means insoluble, problem of the admission of all our children, regardless of birth, into any recognised school, the recent attempt by some Protestants in Edinburgh to organise a school strike offers us both consolation and encouragement. That the strike was thought of at all is an indication that religious intolerance is not confined to our country; but the fact that the strike failed to materialise and ended in a fiasco shows that the sanity of predominant opinion can wear down and ought to wear down the extreme prejudices of the fanatical or perverse minority in a free country. Government orders, no matter how well-intentioned or with what harnesses enforced, can do but little in this necessary and urgent matter. Intelligent and healthy public opinion must be behind the Government and support it in all reasonable measures to root out the evil, and in the creation and propagation of such right opinion the help of teachers, managements, and the local leaders generally is invaluable. The desire to abolish these glaring social evils is not the monopoly of any group or party in the country; it is the general voice of humanity and the declared policy of all civilised Government; and you have a clear duty cast upon you to encourage and establish social equality throughout the sphere of your influence.

Please do not mistake me as suggesting that you should become in any narrow sense the propagandists of any particular school of thought or that our University should stoop to the regimentation of the young minds entrusted to its care. Recent happenings in Italy and Germany have reminded us that, to-day as of old, the British character provides "a cool spot in the desert, and a steady and sane oracle amongst all the deliriums of mankind". And the terrible and spectacular success of certain drastic educational methods on the Continent convey to us a solemn warning against the loose talk that is often heard in our own country concerning 'national education', as though the end of education is national rather than individual. I admire, and would plead earnestly for, the British ideal of education, thus described by Sir James Barrie: "To educate our men and women primarily not for their country's good, but for their own; not so much to teach them what to think as how to think; not preparing them to give us as little trouble as possible in the future but sending them into it in the hope that they will give trouble".

This care and concern for the individual student and the spirit of a kindly tolerance, and this horror of excessive discipline and servile unanimity, are not unknown to India, which through the ages has welcomed and produced a wide variety of social institutions and many remarkable personalities. Our systems of philosophy diverged endlessly and the intellectual freedom of our thinkers knew no bounds. Our reverence for our past and our just pride in the achievements of our ancestors should persuade us, no less powerfully than the new light which we have received from England, that liberty of thought is a precious possession and that education should not degenerate into propaganda, nor our citizens into unthinking automatons.

In our public life, therefore, the responsibility of the truly educated man is especially heavy in the days to come, if we wish to make parliamentary democracy function successfully in India. The leaders of opinion must be wise, tolerant and balanced men and women, who will apply to policies and personalities dispassionate

and critical minds. Democracy is government by opinion rather than blind passion or brute force, and it gives to ideas a dynamic power which will be dangerous, if the ideas are unworthy. "Ignorance, static and inert, is bad, but ignorance in motion is the most terrible force in nature, for it may destroy in its passage the accumulated mental and material capital of generations". Let not our friction with the British in political or economic matters make us unmindful or contemptuous of their great gifts of liberalism, tolerance and free political institutions. The role of English public school men and University men in the long and glorious history of that country is too vast and pervasive for summary statement. To take a simpler, but not less convincing example, Czechoslovakia—that island in a dictatorial sea—owes her independence, her trade and commerce, her delicately balanced and dearly cherished democracy, with adult franchise, proportional representation and due regard for all minorities, owes indeed all that makes her existence worth while, to Dr. Masaryk and Dr. Benes, two University men.

It will not be given to all of you to be thus "lifted high, conspicuous objects in a nation's eye". Many will no doubt be left "unthought of in obscurity" and must learn to live in reconciliation with your stunted powers; as village Hampdens, it may be, and mute inglorious Miltons, or even as doctors and lawyers, officials and traders in a small way, or school-masters subject to the privations and indignities of their class.

Perhaps you will not consider me impertinent if I offer you a few words of advice on the missionary or Dharma side (as distinct from the professional or trade union side) of the work of doctors, teachers, traders and other servants of the public. While it may be necessary and proper that you should exercise a narrow and vigorous professional feeling in all matters concerning emoluments, privileges and status, you have to cast aside all thought of external or organised support, all ideas of jealousy or inferiority and all feelings of discontent, when you enter the sickroom or the class-room and come face to face with the people whose welfare, of body or of mind, is in your keeping. Surely, the cash nexus does not exhaust human relationships; and the prosperity and happiness of a nation depend less on the brilliance of its leaders or the form of its government than on the general level of right feeling and right conduct and on the spread of the spirit of service among all the people.

To teachers, in particular, I would address a special appeal. In the actual day-to-day work of the school, no matter what the conditions of service may be, I would plead for contentment and joy and even enthusiasm, because these things are, in the larger interest of the country, necessary and in practice always possible. A self-induced amnesia is often an excellent restorative. If I may offer an analogy from a subject of which, both in theory and practice, I claim to possess some knowledge, the teacher among his pupils is like the gardener among his plants, and ought to put out of his mind all the bleakness and brutality of the world outside, and watch, with tenderness and complete, if temporary, self-surrender, the slow but wonderful outburst of colour and form and life in the things he helps to grow.

A garden is a lovable thing...  
The veriest school  
Of peace ;...  
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

What the poets have sung, the humblest and the least inspired of us can experience for himself in the green shade of a garden; and it seems to me that a similar quiet happiness must belong to those who are nurturing a far more precious and beautiful garden.

But no garden, and least of all this human and national one, can be made by "singing, 'Oh, how beautiful!' and sitting in the shade." It is the business of society to recognise the importance and reward adequately, in pay as well as consideration, the labours of the teacher. If the best asset of a nation is its human material, no nation-building activity can compare in importance with that of education, with that training, strengthening and perfecting of the 'body, mind and character' which, under whatever name or form it may appear, is the real work of the teachers of a nation. The ideal arrangement, so far at least elementary education is concerned, would certainly be that the nation rather than any local or subordinate body or authority should make itself ultimately responsible for it, and exercise over the whole system a firm central control, so that freedom as well as security may be guaranteed

by the nation to all those who are engaged in what is obviously the first and the widest of nation-building activities.

The evolution of the race is not now left wholly to the blind forces of Nature; man in his wisdom and energy can control and direct the working of these forces and compel them to build a better world for him. And organised education is, next to the forces of nature, the most powerful weapon in the hands of intelligent men for the creation by evolutionary processes of a better world. The desire for a better world as well as the means, scientific and spiritual, by which it is to be attained can be instilled into the minds of the young in one way only and that is by the conscious and unconscious influence of the teachers of the nation. When so much depends on this influence, is not a mood of bitterness almost a crime? For an unworthy teacher is not merely useless but positively dangerous.

"Whatever may be the controversies as regards education as a means to an end," the Governor of Bengal said recently, "it would be a sad day for any country, when learning for its own sake ceased to be held in high honour. I believe that whatever changes may take place in the future, the scholarship pursuing his way in peace and quietness will ever be held in high esteem by the peoples and Governments in India."

This was said of the 'useless learning' of a dead language. How much more then should we honour modern learning engaged in the gigantic, nay, Sisyphian task of modern education, a task which is as indispensable as it is laborious. Education is fundamentally the initiation of each member of a new generation into the collective heritage of human knowledge and experience. The great problem of education is, in the words of the late Professor Raleigh, the problem of how to make good our losses. Learned men die off as rapidly as the unlearned and the race for knowledge is a race against "the steady and oncoming tide of destruction and oblivion". Our schools and colleges have to work at high pressure to fill from generation to generation the emptiness caused by their unwearied enemy, Time. Every thirty years or less, they have to replace in new human repositories all the knowledge and all the skill in the world so that our sons shall know all the secrets and wield all the powers of the best and wisest men now living. "We must run hard if we wish to stay where we are."

If then you are convinced that there is nothing radically wrong, and nothing wholly foreign to us, in the system of education which you have pursued, may I not appeal to you to cease being apologetic for it but rather to uphold and propagate it through your own beautiful language and so make it more and more fruitful of good to yourself and to others? You should feel proud and elated that you—a handful amid a great multitude—have had your eyes and years opened to the wonders and possibilities of this world, 'wherein we have our happiness or not at all', and you should go forth and spread abroad, by word and deed, this rich, varied and life-giving culture, of which you are the trustees for the masses of our countrymen.

## The Madras University Convocation

The following is the text of the Convocation Address delivered to the graduates admitted to degrees at the Convocation of the University of Madras on the 29th. August 1936 by *Mahamahopadhyaya S. Kuppuswami Sastri*:

*Mr. Chancellor, Sisters and Brothers of the Madras Academic Fraternity. Ladies and Gentlemen:—*

I am grateful to His Excellency the Chancellor for the honour which he chose to do me by inviting me to deliver the customary address at this Convocation. With a long roll of seventy-eight illustrious predecessors before me, not to be afraid of my address turning out to be platitudinous and vapid would require an uncommon degree of self-importance, of which I am utterly incapable. However, I promptly accepted His Excellency's invitation, overcoming my hesitation by my *Sanskritised* memory,

which helped me to take courage from this comforting observation made by our 'memorial Kalidasa in his Sakuntala :—

"If persons of no consequence acquit themselves with credit in great functions, know that it is all in virtue of the inspiring honour vouchsafed by the privileged powers above. Could the cripple Aruna end the dark and come the dawn, if the thousand-rayed Sun should not place him in the front and let him harbingers the coming day?"

*"vaidhyanti karmasu mahatvapī yanniyogya  
samhvananagunamashī tamisaranam  
kim vādhahīyadarumastamasam vīdhātī  
tam ośi sahasrabīranō dhūri natarisya"*

Further, it is a source of special gratification that I have to deliver this address under the aegis of the second Indian and first Hindu Chancellor.

On this important occasion, my thoughts and the thoughts of my academic colleagues and of the numerous students and friends in this hall, turn back gloomily on the great educationist and friend of India, the late Rev. Father Bertram, whose familiar face with its characteristically benevolent smile, it is our misfortune to miss here to-day and it will be our misfortune to miss everywhere and for ever in this world. He came out to India in 1868, graduated from this University in 1866 and became the Principal of the St. Joseph's College, Trichinopoly, in 1900. After working for fifteen years in Trichinopoly, he came to Madras, founded the Loyola College and developed it very rapidly into a splendid constituent college satisfying all the requirements of the new University Act. His students gratefully remember his sympathetic knowledge of their needs and difficulties, his readiness to help them in all possible ways and his abiding interest in their welfare. In his disappearance from this world, his students have lost a good friend and helpful guide; his friends have lost a reliable, perfectly selfless, sweet and reasonable adviser; the authorities of this University have lost an indefatigable worker and a shrewd and progressive peace-maker; and the great educational fraternity of Catholics in this country have lost one of their most valuable brothers, whose sincerity and catholicity easily made him one of the best models of spiritual good manners. May his soul rest in eternal peace and bliss and may his memory be a great source of inspiration to this University!

#### *Graduates of the year,*

My first duty is to offer you, on behalf of the University, our hearty felicitations on the success which you have won by right of your attainments. It is a source of great pleasure to me, that, among the recipients of our congratulations this afternoon, there are several graduates who have obtained the higher Degrees, which imply a superior quality of work and an intensive specialization and research in certain subjects. On my own day of graduation, exactly thirty-five years and five months ago, the number of persons who qualified for the Degree of Master of Arts was much smaller than it is to-day and the first lady who qualified for the Master's Degree—Mrs. Sathianathan—happened to figure the brightest ornament of the convocation of the 29th of March, 1901. On that day, the Honourable Mr. Shephard, in his address, expressed the hope, though with considerable diffidence, that Mrs. Sathianathan's success might lead many others of her sex to follow her example. His hope has been realised happily, within the last thirty-five years, in the large measure of success which the women students of this University have achieved in the sphere of higher education, through the Colleges exclusively intended for them and through men's Colleges. In my department alone—the Sanskrit department—no less than ten ladies have so far qualified themselves for the B. A. (Honours) and M. A. Degrees, two of them having distinguished themselves with a *first class*. The number of ladies who have qualified for the Master's Degree in the other departments, is no less encouraging. This indicates, in an unmistakable manner, that the education of women, under the auspices of the Madras University, has been progressing rapidly. That there are, at present, on our rolls, over one thousand three hundred women graduates; that many of them have qualified for the higher Degrees; that nearly fifty per cent of them have qualified for the teaching profession; to crown all this—that this year—1936—has been particularly lucky in claiming to its credit, the two first lady Ph. D.'s—Miss C. Minakshi and Miss V. Paranjoti, who recently distinguished themselves in a noteworthy manner, by their effective and substantial research in Indian History and Indian Philosophy; and that South India continues to



in a creditable manner, her first place in respect of educational progress among Indian women—these are undoubtedly bright features of which all of us interested in education would feel justified in thinking well, with great satisfaction.

Lady graduates are entitled to the warmest felicitations of all friends of India. They symbolise, in ancient Indian culture, the *Acly* and *divine* mother and to them our sweet reverence is due in a full measure. It should be remembered by all the lady graduates that the ideal of Indian womanhood, as typified by *Maitreyi* in the *Bṛhadaranyaka*, by *Sita* in the *Ramayana*, by *Sukanya* in the *Devī-Bhagavata*, by *Savitri*, *Damayanti* and *Panchali* in the *Mahabharata*, can easily be maintained to be always unsurpassable in its purity and loftiness. The first and greatest exhortation which the teacher in the Taittiriyaopaniṣad addresses to a student on the termination of his pupilship in the teacher's residential college (*gurukula*) is, as most of us know, "Venerate thy mother as thy God"—"*Matrdevo Bhava*". It is the high privilege and the great responsibility of the lady graduates to cherish untarnished and realise in their life all the noble implications of the Indian ideal of cultured womanhood, as known in the past history of Indian Culture. Their responsibility in this direction is very great; any approximation to *Ramabhadra* or *Nala* or *Yagnavalkya* would be comparatively less difficult than an approximation to *Sita* or *Damayanti* or *Maitreyi*. Their education has placed them in a position in which they can claim economic independence and compete with men in all occupations and in the pursuit of the recreations, diversions and forms of social service, which the modern world has learnt to value. They have every right to rebel against the double standard of morals for the two sexes, which some blind customs have allowed to operate in India and other countries. They are quite competent to undertake the duty of emancipating their uneducated sisters by educating them and lifting them up to a higher level. In doing all this, they have to remember that the task of promoting equality between men and women is exceedingly delicate and complicated in its nature. Equality may, with great advantage to society, be secured by the enlargement of the freedom of women in respect of all good things and by the curtailment of the freedom of men in respect of all bad things. 'In respect of all good things strictly' in the former case, and 'in respect of all bad things strictly' in the latter case—these two significant reservations should never be forgotten. They have also to remember that, whatever public status may be as educated women the genius of India's ancient civilisation and culture requires that they should secure and maintain in an efficient manner, the dominant place which God in His Great Wisdom has reserved for them in the pivotal institution of Indian civilisation—viz., *family*; and this important institution depends entirely for its unshuffled cohesiveness and continuity upon the sacred institution called *marriage*. It would be a terrific disaster for Indian civilisation and culture, if the new generation of educated men and women should be found incapable of appreciating the beautiful ideals of married and family life, of the household (*grha*) and the Queen of the household (*grhini*), so vividly depicted in India's ancient literature. The educated women who have been admitted to the Degrees of University must necessarily play a very important part in the direction of women's education in India. I would request them all to remember that the education of Indian women—of Hindu women—should not be inextricably linked up with the European ideal and should be designed so as to develop them into *Maitreyi*, or *Sita* or *Damayanti* or *Savitri* or *Sukanya* so as to turn them into magnificent wives, noble mothers and wisely alert sisters. To this end, the necessary foundation in the pre-collegiate stages should be laid with wise discrimination and great caution. We may have an excellent idea of what a sound educational scheme for women ought to be in the pre-collegiate stages, by pondering over the precious suggestions which Dr. Besant made in one of her speeches many years ago. That great and wise friend of India said in 1901—"A thorough and literary knowledge of the Vernacular—Hindi, Bengalee, Guzerati, Tamil, Telugu, whatever it may be—including written composition; a knowledge of Sanskrit sufficient to enable a woman to read with pleasure and profit the magnificent literature of the past, its poems, its dramas, its stories; a knowledge of English, because under present conditions such a knowledge is necessary for sympathy with English educated husband and sons, because it opens the way to a world of thought that may be studied with advantage and enjoyed and because it brings the women into touch with a most potent factor in the modern civilisation of India; a knowledge of Hygiene, of the laws which make for health in the house, in persons' habits and in domestic arrangements; a knowledge of the elementary physiology and household medicine sufficient to make the mother an intelligent nurse, and in slight ailments physician for her children; a knowledge of

some art, music, above all, painting, needle-work, plain and artistic, that she may make the home bright with pure attraction and make it a centre of happy and harmless amusement. Such an education would do nothing to injure the sweet grace of the Indian woman, while it would enlarge her mind, increase her influence and strengthen her character. Needless to add that this education must be accompanied by religious instruction which will purify the heart, enlighten the understanding, stimulate devotional feelings, and satisfy the spirit as it seeks to realise its divinity. Never will the Hindu woman lose her spirituality; but she needs to add to her faith, knowledge, so that she may be a sage as well as a saint, and bring to the service of her great ancestral religion woman's wisdom as well as woman's devotion. So shall she avert from husband and sons the evils of scepticism and apostasy. Hinduism has kept her pure; it must again as in the old days keep her wise." If Hinduism has kept the Indian womanhood pure and if it must again, as in the old days, keep it wise, as Dr. Besant said, and wisely effective let the Indian womanhood draw its inspiration from the *Ardhanarisvara* image which symbolises, in a beautiful and significant way, the great synthesis which the Hindu society should always aim at—the synthesis between woman and man, between art and science, between self-effacement and self-realization, between renunciation and possession, between beauty and sublimity, between sweet suggestion and telling expression; between speech and thought, between charm and response, between motherhood and fatherhood, and above all, between the *dharma* of a family life and active and skilled service in the wide world of diverse pursuits and purposes. May the great Hindu symbolism of *Ardhanarisvara*, synthesising *Shiva* and *Siva*, protect the glorious purity of Indian womanhood!

#### *Fellow-Graduates,*

The three questions formally put to you on this solemn occasion and to the fulfilment of which you have sincerely and solemnly, pledged yourselves are well in their place and are highly significant as formulas which you will do well to remember always and use in your life as your unfailing source of inspiration. The questions should be understood to be so many, disguised and implicit imperatives, comprehending within their scope, all your future activities for which your education in schools and colleges have qualified you: and they are the modern counterparts of what the great teachers of Vedic India exhorted their students to do in the world after finishing their educational course in the *gurukula*. When these questions are put to you, students of ancient Indian culture cannot help reminding themselves of the undisguised imperatives in the never-to-be-forgotten exhortation by the *Acarya* to his *sisyas* in the eleventh *aranyakas* of the first section of the *Taittiriyaopanisad*. The elements of universal appeal in these Upanisadic exhortations can never be missed. "Speak the truth; do your duty; never neglect your duties to your race and family; never neglect what contributes to well-being and prosperity; let thy mother be thy God; let thy father be thy God; let thy teacher be thy God; let thy guest who is in need of thy hospitality be thy God; do good; never do any evil; remember and cultivate the virtues which we have practised; and avoid the wrongs which we may have done."

"satyam vada: dharam cara: prajatanam ma vyavachetah;  
kusalanam pramaditavyam; bhutya na pramaditavyam;  
matrdevo bhava; pitrdevo bhava; acaryadevo bhava;  
atithidevo bhava; yanyasnavitanyani karmadi; tani sevityani; no itarani;  
yanyasnamam sucaritani; tani tvayapanyani; no itarani."

In the questions now put to you and in the old-world Upanisadic scheme of exhortation, there is an unmistakable indication of the fact that your education raises the legitimate expectation that you will in due time play the role of constructive citizens in your life.

Your pledges, all of them, in the first place, impose upon you the duty of adopting and cultivating assiduously the attitude of a *fiduciary* in everything that you may be called upon to do. The *fiduciary* attitude is one of the essential elements constituting constructive citizenship. If you remember that "the institutions that last longest that link human beings together in the most abiding and beneficent fellowship, are those that rest upon a *fiduciary* basis, those that embody a tradition of trustworthy service, those that gather to their service a continuous succession of honourable and loyal men, those that gather vitality as they go, becoming not weaker with age, but stronger and more beneficent in contrast with institutions that rest on force or

coercion"—if you remember all this, you would hardly find it difficult to appreciate the great value of a fiduciary attitude of the young men going out of a University. This University, like any other University, lives in an atmosphere dominated by the ideas of trust and trusteeship; and by calling upon you to conduct yourselves as become members of this University, in your daily life, the University reminds you that the knowledge which you have acquired through your colleagues could achieve nothing unless you hold it in trust and use it in a proper and wise manner, and that the skill which you have acquired would be of no value in society, unless you make use of your skill in your daily life as a trustee for the common good.

Your deportment in your familiar discourses in daily life is also a matter of great moment; and this is determined largely by the spirit of trusteeship which you, as educated persons, bring to bear upon your talks. To the extent to which you are able to blend together what is true and what is agreeable in your conversation, without allowing either to detract from the other, to that extent you could realise in practice the ancient Indian ideals of *satya* and *priya*; and to that extent you could acquit yourselves creditably as educated persons who hold in trust the training which you have received in thinking and speaking.

You should conduct yourselves, as become members of this University. You are all sons and daughters of India and this is an Indian University. India's past is great; and her present as well as future should be also great, if it could be wisely correlated with her past. If, as the worthy Dean Inge (a former Dean of St. Paul's) observed, less than three years ago, the only promise of a better future for his country was to be looked for from those to whom her past was dear, it could be said, with greater appropriateness, to the graduates of an Indian University, that the only promise of a better future for India is to be looked for from those to whom her past is dear. A true Indian has his life certainly in the present, but he finds the roots of his life in the past, and has his eyes turned towards the future. No sensible person would ask you to think that the past is all good and the present is all bad. Many of you may be thinking at this moment of Kalidasa's wise remark that mere antiquity is not a guarantee of goodness and mere novelty is not a mark of badness and that wise men discriminate what is good from what is bad by a careful consideration of intrinsic worth:—

"*puranamityeva na sadhu sarvam  
na api kavyam navamityavadayam  
santah parikṣanyataradbhajante  
mudhah parapratyayaneyabuddhih.*"

The Indian expression for *progress* is '*Yogasama*'. This is a compendious expression signifying all the essential elements making up the meaning of the term *Progress*. *Yoga* consists in advancing further and getting what has not already been got; and *sama* consists in conserving all the good things already obtained. Ancient Indian culture is equally solicitous about *Yoga* and *sama*. Any attempt to write on a clean slate and to demolish the past completely and build anew is against the nature of India's genius and such attempts will prove to be dismal failures in India. You are trustees of the future of India and your past must be dear to you. You cannot hope to have an intelligent appreciation of India's past, without acquiring adequate ability to understand and appreciate the Indian literature, which enshrines all the good achievements of ancient India in the spiritual and secular spheres of life. Such ability can be acquired, only if the graduates of our University are adequately conversant with Sanskrit and with at least one of the South Indian languages. That the spirit of ancient Indian culture is primarily embodied in Sanskrit literature, that the distinctive phases of South Indian culture are embodied in the great literatures in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, and that these distinctive phases of South Indian culture influenced and were profoundly influenced in very ancient times by Sanskrit culture and can never be completely disentangled and dissociated from Sanskrit elements—are propositions which no level-headed person can think of challenging. It would thus be obvious that every graduate of our University should acquire, either in the stage of University education or beyond that stage, an adequate knowledge of Sanskrit and at least one of the South Indian languages—so much knowledge as would enable him to appreciate ancient literature of Universal appeals, like the *Upanisads*, the *Gita*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Sakuntala* in Sanskrit, and as for example the immortal *Kural* and *Kambaramayana* in Tamil. Towards this end, the curricula of studies in schools and Colleges need not be overburdened, by compelling each student to study English, Sanskrit and a vernacular in his class-room. This object

can be best achieved only through schemes of extra-curricular studies; under which Sanskrit under-graduates and Sanskrit graduates would easily persuade themselves to study and enjoy the beauties of a few Tamil classics or classics in some other South Indian language, and similarly undergraduates and graduates in any of the South Indian languages would easily persuade themselves to study and enjoy a few Sanskrit classics. Whatever might have been the nature of the cleavages that existed in ancient India among the diverse creeds and dogmas, there were absolutely no cultural cleavages or inter-cultural and inter-linguistic jealousies, such as we witness some times, in these days, whenever any good measures are being discussed for promoting the study of ancient Indian languages and literatures. You should remember that great makers of South Indian literatures in the past were either themselves Sanskrit scholars or scholars who were able to appreciate readily the good elements of Sanskrit culture, and that great representatives of Sanskrit culture in the past never hesitated to seek and secure the valuable help of the vernaculars in their great work of expounding and propagating great truths. It is only by strenuous work in this direction that the problems involved in the employment of the mother-tongue as the chief educational medium can be solved and that the spirit of ancient Indian culture can be re-captured and effectively brought to bear on the present and future schemes of Indian education. The successful working, on a large scale of extra-curricular and extension schemes, with special reference to the languages and literatures of India, depends largely upon the financial resources available for the purpose. Will any rich philanthropist of South India come forward to help our University with a generous and substantial endowment towards this purpose?

The questions put to you and your solemn pledges clearly imply that you should think mainly *in time* and not so much *in space*. The ascendancy of space-thinking is partly due to a deep-rooted perversity of mind which attaches greater importance to the *space* than to any other sense. "Space-thinking", as a modern writer puts it, "is insufficient whenever the meaning of human life is in question, because human life, though it displays itself as a spectacle in space, goes on as a conscious experience in time". Time-thinking is a natural mode of thought. It may be called 'the historical mind'. and all sound history should deal not only with the past, but with the present as growing into the future. Time-thinking is bound up essentially with the idea of *lastingness*. Ancient Indian culture has invariably stressed *lastingness* (*satyata*) as the essence of the highest conception of reality (*satya*) and has thus revealed, in a very telling manner, the significance and value of time-thinking. Some ardent and well-meaning disciples of Karl Marx, who are enthusiastic space-thinkers, may place before you—note the term—a social *scheme* or *system*, in which all men and forces are *placed*—note the term again—in right relationships to one another. As Indians, you have inherited a great tradition of time-thinking from your past and you should, as time-thinkers, ask—how long will these men and forces stay where you have placed them, how long will that relationship last?

You should ask whether the socialistic space-thinkers are not placing before you "a picture, perhaps a Utopian picture, of human beings caught by the eye at a very happy moment, photographed, so to speak, in the state of social behavior the space-thinker considers most desirable", say, in a place like the Soviet Russia. The Marxian propaganda may be loud and confident and a good many of our young men may come to believe that "they see a red dawn rising, full of promise, in Russia, where all the old values and traditions, with every atom of religious faith, are being torn up by the roots". So long as communism and socialism derive their sap from the heritage of Karl Marx of which dogmatic materialism and atheism form part; so long as they are based on a class-hatred and dominated by anti-godism, so long as they generate and foster a novel disease of a type of neo-orthodoxy, which seeks to establish a new form of superstition manifesting itself in willingness "to entrust the navigation to people who believes in wrecks as a principle or make a business of piracy"; and so long as the new civilisation of communism and socialism refuses to believe in the past or the future of the soul and thinks exclusively in a spatial and quantitative groove:—you will be safe as the inheritors of a great time-thinking past, only if you stand off from these new experiments. And as inheritors of the all-embracing, all-unifying *advaita* of the Upanishads, as expounded by Sankara, you should strengthen yourselves by the hope, as H. G. Wells puts it, that, out of all the trouble and tragedy of this present time, there will soon emerge in India an *advaitic* revival, "of a simplicity and scope to draw together men of alien races and now discrete traditions into one common and sustained way of living for the world's service"; and by the hope that "religious emotion may presently blow through Indian life

again like a great wind bursting the doors and flinging open the shutters of the individual life". May you become worthy of such a revival as trustees of the habit of time-thinking which you have inherited from our past!

Slightly modifying the splendid words of Edmund Burke, it may be said that a University, as well as a nation, "is a partnership and trusteeship in all science and all art and in every virtue and perfection; and as the ends of such a partnership and trusteeship cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership and trusteeship not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born."

You will have a legitimate claim for the privileges of a partnership in University life and national life, if you fulfil the three main conditions of constructive citizenship—that you should see that every variety of your valuable occupation is dominated by the fiduciary spirit; that you should aim at the development of skill in every thing that you do; and that you should endeavour to create and perfect certain scientific methods "for harmonizing conflicting claims and for turning human relations which would otherwise be mutually destructive, into relation of mutual helpfulness." It would do you good to note and remember the manner in which Indian culture used to glorify the fiduciary spirit. Generally, at the end of Royal grants, making endowments for purposes of public good, it is known to all familiar with Indian epigraphy that an *amustubh* line is inscribed in these terms:

*"yasat punyamavapnoti palanadacyameam padam"*

"One gains spiritual merit by making endowments for good causes; but one gains eternal life through trusteeship." This signifies the great importance which ancient Indian culture attaches to the position of a fiduciary.

Your aim in everything that you do should be the perfection of your skill. Skill is an essential ingredient of constructive citizenship. You should not fall under the malign spell of the concept 'happiness.' for 'happiness' is "the one object of human endeavour in regard to which men in general are the worst judges and the readiest to be made fools of." You must choose a vocation that challenges your skill and puts you on your mettle. "Beware of soft jobs and remember the fall of Lucifer." The doctrine of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" is a pernicious doctrine. No doubt, all science, all knowledge, fulfils itself in its applications. In a book discussing the applications of science, it is solemnly stated that science is, "the mighty instrument which enables man to conquer nature and develop her resources for his own advantage." This view is as pernicious in its effect as the doctrine of "the happiness of the greatest number." So long as the view prevails among those who have studied "science" and have acquired scientific knowledge, it would be impossible to reconcile science with religion or morality or humanities. Replace the doctrine of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" by the wholesome doctrine of "the greatest skill of the greatest number". Remember that Science is given to man not to distil the universe into individual advantage, not to be a mere short cut to our ends, not to be a mere labour-saving device, not to be merely "a means of satisfying the desire for happiness with the minimum of effort and personal skill, till man's vocation as a worker becomes a mere affair of pressing buttons and turning switches. In the earlier stages of its history, science tended to destroy art; and if it were to stop with that or persist in that and should it fail to be a powerful ally to man in developing himself by the skilled performance of what he knows and in securing the greatest skill of the greatest number; and if it should help man only in increasing his periods of 'untrammelled leisure' without sufficient skill to vitalize his leisure; if that be all, then I for one will say:—"Let the hour stand accursed when science was born into this world". It is indeed highly comforting to think that the God-appointed destiny of science is to become "the founder and the diffuser of art, completing itself in the practised skill of men". Remember that ancient Indian culture brought about, in this way, the reconciliation of science with religion, through the elevation of *skill* to the rank of one of the highest aims of life. When the Lord calls upon Arjuna to do, *whatever he does, as an offering to Him* and says:—

*"yat karosi yadaenasi yajihosi dadasi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat purusva  
madarpanam"*

He requires Arjuna really to secure the highest degree of perfection in all that he does; for, no act would be worthy of being offered to God, which is not done with

mage of the Government and the people of India to employ duly qualified Cadets of the "Dufferin" as Officers of their steamers in adequate number ;

(c) The Federation urges that whenever mail contracts to Shipping Companies are made or renewed, definite conditions should be attached to the grant of mail subsidies as to the appointment of Indian apprentices and officers in ships belonging to such companies.

Mr. Mehta, in a lengthy speech, declared that it was subsidy which these shipping companies were getting and not payment for services, as the Commerce Member said in the Assembly, as the word subsidy was even used in postal returns. He said the problem was becoming acute and must be tackled by the Government immediately.

Mr. S. H. Lulla and Mr. Mazumdar strongly supported the resolution, which was carried.

Mr. Haridas Lalji moved a resolution recording emphatic protest against the attitude of steamship companies in not accepting measurement of cargo by all registered Chambers of Commerce at every port and against the Government for not giving full effect to the resolution of the Federation in this connection passed in 1923 and suggesting the appointment of Boards for the purpose of carrying out measurement work at minimum charge.

Mr. Buch supported the resolution, which was carried.

#### DUTY ON IMPORTED COAL

The last resolution was moved by Mr. A. L. Ojha regarding the coal industry.

The resolution stated that in view of the most unsatisfactory position of the coal industry due to (1) the burden of numerous local taxes, (2) the surcharge on railway freight and terminal charges, (3) the unhealthy competition on account of imported coal and oil fuel and (4) the recent changes in the coal purchase policy of the Government of India for railways which is more or less responsible for the wasteful methods of mining with the consequential result of frequent colliery disasters, this Federation strongly urges the Government of India to impose immediately an adequate duty on imported coal and oil fuel, appoint a committee of enquiry for examining the present position of this important basic industry, with a view to suggesting remedies for its rehabilitation.

Mr. K. Dutt supported the resolution and it was passed.

The Federation discussed, several members participating, the question of taking steps for strengthening the finances of the Federation, with a view to increasing its activities. The matter was deferred to a later date. In the meantime, the question would be considered by various bodies and individuals concerned.

Mr. D. P. Khaitan moved a vote of thanks, expressing warmest appreciation of services rendered by the President, Mr. Padampat Singhania, the youngest President of the Federation, being about 32 years.

Mr. A. D. Shroff and Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai joined therein to which Mr. Singhania made a suitable reply. Thereafter the Federation dispersed.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following is the complete Executive Committee for 1936-37 :—

President : D. P. Khaitan.

Vice-President : Kumararaja of Chettinad.

Members (elected): Messrs. A. D. Shroff, Manu Subedar, Mr. Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Lala Shriram, Mr. G. D. Birla, Mr. P. Thakurdas, Mr. Santanam, Mr. Padampat Singhania, Mr. R. M. Chinoy, Mr. Dahanukar, Mr. Walchand Hirachand, Mr. Chunilal B. Mehta.

Members (co-opted) : Mr. N. R. Sarkar, Mr. S. M. Bashir, Mr. B. Das, Rai Bahadur Ramsaranadas, Babu Gurucharanlal.

Treasurers : Messrs. A. L. Ojha and S. C. Law.

# The Bombay Indian Merchants' Chamber

Presiding over the 28th. Annual General Meeting of the Indian Merchants Chamber, held in Bombay on the 31st. January 1936, Mr. Nana Subedar dealt with the big changes that are taking place in the distribution of wealth in the country, whereby the poor in India are becoming poorer, while the growth of industries has created opportunities for the rich to become richer, the middle class bearing a relatively higher burden of taxes and being oppressed by the perpetual nightmare of lack of prospects and unemployment. He also hoped that India, as a result of these factors, would not suffer from the bitterness of class hatred, in addition to communal.

Referring to the export of gold in large quantities, he observed:—"India sold in 1932-33, 1933-34 and 1934-35, an average of Rs. 86 crores less of merchandise every year than the average of the previous three years. Elsewhere in the world such a situation is adjusted by a reduction in the exchange value, by stimulating exports in various ways and by a rigorous curtailment of imports. In India not only has the exchange to be maintained, but in official quarters there is great anxiety to secure an increase of imports to be paid for by the export of gold. In national economy it is not right that India should have purchased the various commodities of commerce and paid for them with solid gold. To fritter away this valuable reserve that was in the hands of the population, for the temporary maintenance of exchange was a dis-service to this country when every country in the world, including England, was adding to its gold resources, and most countries in the world were taking up all the gold that was available inside for the purposes of central reserve.

"Other countries in the world have managed to maintain their exchanges by stimulating exports and putting difficulties in the way of imports, either by high-r duties, or by quotas, or by developing internal sources to substitute the imports. In India not only are the doors kept open, but the Finance Member, who is a zealous free trader, is talking of reducing duties all round with a view to stimulate imports, that is to say, with a view to further stimulate the export of gold from India."

He next referred to the prevailing agricultural distress in India, where the Indian agriculturist was receiving crores of rupees less for his crops than he used to in 1928-29. With reduced purchasing power in has to bear many of the taxes, which were inelastic. The freight rates had not been materially reduced. Interest and other charges payable by the agriculturist had not declined and the low bank rate, which they were told was the result of the plethora of money, did not reflect business conditions in vogue in India and did not touch the agriculturist who is in debt. His complaint against the Government was that, they had not during the last five years made any attempt to bring about a rise in the prices of agricultural commodities, though the need of such a rise has been acknowledged over and over again even by the officials themselves.

"Government have always been unwilling to have either expansion of credit or that of currency in this country on an adequate scale," he continued, "because a rise in prices and a favourable balance of trade on merchandise would stop the export of gold and may actually turn the tide, inducing purchase by India of gold—a position that would clearly be embarrassing to the Exchange Control, the Bank of England and the London Money market. There is a conflict of interests, and in this conflict, those in whose hands the administration of India's finances are put, are not throwing their weight on the side of this country.

Mr. Subedar criticised at length the Ottawa Agreement which, he held, benefitted India, while in our trade relations with other countries it actually injured Indian interests by provoking retaliation. With regard to protective tariffs, conditions had changed since 1922, when the Fiscal Commission laid down the principles, even the United Kingdom having gone over to the policy of heavy protection; but the Government still stuck to the old conditions and interpreted them with such strictness and severity as to disagree with the recommendations of the Tariff Board at times and refuse protection. They wanted, therefore, that Government should be brought to take more interest in the development of Indian industries and trade by defining their policy with regard to protection, and by negotiating bilateral trade agreements with other countries. Among the needs of the trade, he suggested the immediate appointment of a Trade Commissioner in Japan;

regulation of Indian trade with Germany with the object of introducing a reciprocal arrangement, which would increase the volume of trade between the two countries, and laws to make up for the present deficiency in the present state of law with regard to the regulation of monopolies, trusts, cartels, pools, etc.

Finally, opposing the proposed Railway, he said :—“As a businessman, I would like the Railways to be managed on business lines and I would deprecate interference with the working of the Railways through political or any other pressure either from Indians or Britishers. But the general policy in connection with the Railways could not be divergent from, and must be part of, the general economic policy of the State in India, and the outlook of the Railways towards Indian industries as carriers, and towards Indian manufacturers and suppliers as purchasers of their equipment and stores, must be distinctly national. The device of the Statutory Board appears to us as part of the general programme for reservation of financial and economic matters into the hands of people other than responsible Ministers in India with the possibility that political influences, not Indian, but English, might interfere with the working of the Railways.”

## The Calcutta Chamber of Commerce

The following is the text of the Presidential speech delivered by Mr. Kanailal Jatta at the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta on the 26th. February 1936 :—

It is my painful duty to refer with feelings of sincere regret to the death of His late Majesty, King George V. Throughout the length and breadth of his vast domains, and the world in general, his loss was greatly felt, and we in India particularly mourn his loss at a time when great constitutional changes are in sight. It was the constant desire of His late Majesty that his Indian subjects should occupy their rightful place in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and with that end in view, His Majesty's reign was one of benevolent care and affection towards his Indian subjects in whose betterment he was greatly interested. His Majesty also enjoyed un-failing proofs of the loyalty of his Indian Empire—a fact which was corroborated only in June last by the spontaneous rejoicings all over India on the occasion of His Majesty's Silver Jubilee. On behalf of the Chamber and myself, I offer our heart-felt condolences to her gracious Majesty the Queen, and the Members of the Royal Family in their great bereavement.

We are, however, fortunate to find that our new Sovereign King Edward VIII has personal experience of this country and we have no doubt that His Majesty will take a keen and sympathetic interest in India's welfare both politically and materially. I would now refer to the question of the revision of the Indian income-tax system. As you all know, the Government of India have appointed two experts from the Inland Board of Revenue of Great Britain to examine the entire system and the operation of the Income tax Law in India. They are now touring India collecting material and hearing oral evidence from all those interested in this question. Representatives of our Chamber also met them on the 10th February and discussed with them the hardships that the commercial community is at present experiencing as a result of the various anomalies that exist in the Indian income-tax system. Among the various difficulties experienced by the commercial community, I would like to refer to one or two cases which deserve the closest attention on the part of the Government of India and the exports. I need hardly say that the Income-tax Law as it exists at present is admittedly defective in more ways than one. I would like to draw the attention of the income-tax experts to the necessity of amending Rule No. 8 of the Indian Income-Tax Act so as to permit a double depreciation allowance on machinery employed in factories running day and night, because it is only just and equitable that where machinery has been running day and night for an extended period, depreciation at proportionately increased rates should be allowed. An objection may, however, be raised to this proposal on the ground that it would be difficult to get authentic proofs of hours of daily work in a factory and also that



it would entail much work on the Income-Tax Department. I would suggest that the depreciation allowance may be based upon the average daily running hours of the financial year under assessment and that a certificate of the registered auditors may be accepted as regards the hours of work per day.

The practice of making a roving inspection of account books by reopening the case of the previous year in the matter of income-tax assessment after the assessee is assessed for the current year is another genuine grievance which affects very much the commercial community. During the period of assessment now-a-days all the items of the assessee are subjected to careful scrutiny in case account books are produced and examined. Yet by virtue of section 34 of the Income-Tax Act the Income-Tax Officer is empowered to reopen the assessment of the previous year and to call for books and accounts of any assessee who, the officer thinks, has escaped assessment under certain heads of income or is assessed at too low a rate. This Section 34, as you are all aware, gentlemen, cannot be construed as a detective section but only to rectify the assessment where income has escaped. It has been the practice of the Income Tax Department to call for account books on most frivolous grounds, or even on the basis of anonymous letters posted to an Income-Tax Officer instigated by jealousy or enmity only to harass an assessee. And a roving inspection of account books is instituted. Recently the Calcutta High Court has held in similar circumstances that the items under which the Income-Tax Officer thinks that income has partially or wholly escaped assessment should be disclosed in the notice that is being served on the assessee; but in spite of this observation of the Calcutta High Court and without disclosing in the notice the income which has escaped, I understand, that the practice of making roving inspection of account books is still continued by the Income-Tax Department. It may be assumed that an assessee can get relief if an appeal is preferred before the Commissioner or Asst. Commissioner because they are impartial judges to give relief where necessary, but, gentlemen, I am sorry to say that the assessee gets very little redress of his grievances. It has often happened that where a case before an income-tax officer reaches a stage where an appeal will be preferred by the assessee, the income-tax officer takes the trouble of consulting the Assistant Commissioner or the Commissioner, and this prejudices the mind of those higher authorities. One is inclined to feel that the separation of judicial and executive functions should be carried out more rigorously also in the realm of income-tax. I trust that the Expert Committee will carefully consider this anomaly and suggest a suitable remedy to present the harassment to the assessee at the hands of the income-tax authorities, and further recommend suitable methods where there will be no denial of justice to the assessee.

I would also commend to the attention of these experts the necessity of allowing business losses incurred in former years to be carried forward and set off against the profits earned in subsequent years. It is well known that in recent years owing to trade depression several firms have been unable to losses. It is therefore only fair and reasonable that such set-off should be allowed.

Gentlemen, let me now refer to another important question affecting the commercial community and the general public of Calcutta viz. the rates of electricity charged by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. The Government of Bengal appointed an Advisory Committee in August last whose terms of reference were to advise the Government of Bengal on the question of the charges at present levied by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation Ltd. Representatives of our Chamber appeared also before the Committee to give oral evidence. I feel that a public utility concern like the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation which enjoys a monopoly should consider its duty to charge its various customers as low a rate as it is possible to do. At present the charges are very high and they could be considerably reduced, while still distributing a reasonable dividend to the shareholders of the Company. A perusal of the balance sheets of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation would show that its reserves and dividends have been consistently increasing, and it has issued even bonus shares. It is well-known that the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation has declared dividends at the high rate of 13 per cent for the last few years. Considering the present market conditions, I feel that for a public utility company like the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation which does not meet with any serious competition and whose chances of incurring losses are negligible, a dividend of 18 per cent is far on the high side. If the present dividend is reduced to a lower level it will enable them to decrease the flat rate charged, at present, to the consumers. The representatives of our Chamber also pressed the view that the Advisory Com-

mittee should carefully investigate the items on which the Corporation charges depreciation and should also see as to whether block capital consists of obsolete machinery or other items for which provision for depreciation is necessary. I would also suggest that the Government of Bengal should make a careful investigation into the administration expenses of the Corporation as well as into the necessity of Indianisation of the superior staff of the Corporation as far as possible. I trust that the Advisory Committee have considered all these points which were placed before them and have made suitable recommendations to the Bengal Government in regard to the advisability of making a reduction in the charges at present levied by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation.

Gentlemen, turning from a public utility corporation to Government, it is not too great a step. As you all know Posts and Telegraphs are valuable means of communication in the life of a country and their charges in India are at present very high. The rates for post cards, stamps for envelopes etc. were all increased at a time when India was faced with deficit budgets. This crisis no longer exists, as revealed by the Report of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department for the year 1934-35 recently issued by the Government. The net result of working for 1934-35 was a surplus of over Rs. 37 lakhs as compared with a net deficiency of more than Rs. 51 lakhs during the year 1933-34. Of all the branches of the department, such as the Post Office, Telegraphs and Telephone and Radio, the Post Office earned the highest surplus to the extent of Rs. 24 lakhs as compared with a deficit of Rs. 11.5 lakhs during the previous year. When one sees such bright indications of revenue in the Posts and Telegraphs Department, it is but natural that an appeal for a general reduction in postal rates is being made, and I trust the Finance Member will give adequate relief from the burden of postal rates which were increased when an emergency arose but which to-day no longer exists.

Gentlemen, I shall not allow this occasion to pass without making some observations in regard to the finances of Bengal. I think a reference to this important question is all the more necessary because recently Sir Otto Niemeyer, who has been entrusted with an enquiry relating to the adjustment of Central and Provincial Finances of India, has collected all the facts for an equitable settlement of Bengal's just claims. We in Bengal are deeply indebted to His Excellency Sir John Anderson for his consistent and able advocacy of Bengal's case for financial readjustment, and his speech at St. Andrew's Day Dinner, a few months back, is a striking example of the earnestness of his desire for promoting the welfare of the people of the province and of securing a just treatment for Bengal at the hands of the Central Government. It is hardly necessary for me to refer here to the deplorable condition of Bengal's finances and the recurring deficits since the year 1930-31. The revenues derived from various sources of taxation such as excise, stamps, forest and registration have been reduced on an average of about two crores of rupees during the last five years, and this is mainly due to the deterioration in the economic condition of the people. Jute, which is the mainstay of Bengal's agricultural population, has failed to yield an adequate return to the ryots whose debts are increasing at alarming rates. Only year before last, the Central Government agreed to remit one half of the jute export duty to Bengal in recognition of the just claims put forward by the Bengal Government. Moreover, the Government of Bengal imposed last year, five new taxes in order to make up a portion of their huge deficits. Although the present financial position as revealed on Monday last by Sir John Woodhead shows signs of improvement, it is clear that far years to come Bengal cannot embark upon any ambitious programme of economic reconstruction if she is to continue in her present position which is the creation of the Meston Award. From the year 1919 when the Reforms Act was passed this province has been paying on an average of about four crores of rupees every year by way of Jute export duty, which is now reduced to one half. I am firmly of opinion that if full justice were done to Bengal by a total remission of the jute export duty, Bengal will have less reason for complaint on this important question. I trust that Sir Otto Niemeyer will give careful consideration to the case of Bengal for an equitable adjustment of her claims, and make suitable recommendations which will relieve the financial distress of Bengal.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I wish to thank the Members of the Committee for their whole-hearted co-operation with me in the discharge of my responsibility, and I trust that the members of the Chamber will lend their support in the same courteous manner for the benefit of our Chamber as in the past.

# The B. & O. Chamber of Commerce

Presiding over the annual meeting of the Bihar and Orissa Chamber of Commerce held at Patna on the 21st. March 1936, Rao Bahadur D. D. Theodor, President of the Chamber, said :—

"The present worldwide depression which began in 1930 is responsible for the slow progress in the recovery of world trade, and several countries in the world are trying their might and main to improve their trade. The problem seems to be one calling for a fair adjustment between production and distribution all over the world. It is admitted on all hands that over production is one of the causes that contributes to the present depression, and that the surplus of goods in one country does not find a ready market in other countries, because each country is trying to become economically self-sufficient. To us in India, our export trade consists mainly of agricultural commodities and raw products whereas the import trade of India consists of articles wholly or mainly manufactured. The effects of the depression were felt by India more keenly owing to the greater fall in prices of agricultural products and raw materials as compared with manufactured articles, which will be evinced from the fact that in 1928-29, the year preceding the commencement of the present depression, the value of some of the principal crops in Bihar and Orissa was estimated at Rs. 157 crores, whereas in 1933-34 it was Rs. 55 crores only ; i. e., a reduction of Rs. 84 crores. Such a disastrous fall in agricultural prices has been directly responsible for the reduced purchasing power of the masses who form the bulk of the population in India and who depend mainly on agriculture for their subsistence. It is indeed gratifying to note that during recent years the Government of India have taken various steps to improve the condition of the cultivators, by disseminating knowledge about improved methods of agriculture, farming and husbandry, by establishing demonstration farms, by appointing marketing officers to help the ryots to dispose of their agricultural products, etc. In spite of all these measures, however, agricultural prosperity still seems to be distant, and I am inclined to think that the Government of India should undertake an intensive programme of economic planning over a series of years, with a view to effect an all round improvement in the condition of the people.

"The development of the sugar industry in Bihar under the impetus of protection is indeed responsible for giving direct assistance to the cultivators of sugarcane. Bihar at present stands second in point of importance in the production of sugar in India, and had it not been for such a rapid development in the sugar industry, the cultivators would have been in still greater distress for want of remunerative prices for their agricultural products. At a time when agricultural products failed to give an adequate return, the cultivation of sugarcane came in handy for the agriculturists who were assured of reasonable price of their sugarcane. There is every prospect of the sugar industry making still greater progress provided the necessary co-operation is forthcoming between the Government and the people.

"I am sorry to observe that its position at present is anything but satisfactory. In recent years, it can hardly be said to have received just treatment at the hands of the Government of India. As you all know, the coal industry submitted a scheme for the restriction of the output of coal in order that production might not outstrip demand and better prices might be realised for the coal raised. But the Government of India did not see their way to adopt this scheme even though this scheme was strongly supported by Your Excellency's Government. The coal industry is at present labouring under various handicaps, such as sur-charge on Railway freight and competition of foreign coal in distant markets like Bombay, Ahmedabad, Ceylon, etc. The total abolition of sur-charge on railway freight on coal is an immediate necessity as otherwise coal would find it difficult to move freely to distant markets in India and compete with foreign coal. The Government of India should also impose an increased duty on coal entering into India in order to protect the indigenous industry.

"Another matter which has of late created some amount of anxiety in the public minds is the question of conservation of the coal resources of the country, particularly of the better quality of the Jharia coal, suitable for metallurgical purposes. India has vast resources of iron and other ores and it would indeed be a very great national calamity if in the future, coal be not available for development of the iron

and steel industry for which there is a bright future before the country. Sir Lewis Fermor, Kt., Ex-Director of the Geological Survey of India has, in his recent address before the Asiatic Society of Bengal, laid very great stress on this danger of coal-famine and it is to be hoped that the Government of India will take the matter up at an early date and with the co-operation of the industry, devise some measures which may prolong the life of the better class of Jharia coal for the development of metallurgical industry.

"Before I leave the subject of coal, I think I should say something particularly regarding the soft coke trade on which the bulk of collieries working second class coal are mainly dependent at present. Outside the domestic hearth there is at present very little custom for second class coal.

"I shall now refer to the mica industry in brief. Mica occupies the third place in the list of minerals raised in this province. I am happy to say that the industry is progressing fairly well, as will be evident from the increasing exports of mica during the recent years, in 1932-33 the shipment of mica amounted to 40,000 cwts. valued at Rs. 32 lacs, in 1933-34 this increased to 66,000 cwts. valued at Rs. 45 lacs: while in 1934-35, the figures were 105,000 cwts. valued at 69 lacs. The position of this industry, therefore, seems to be very encouraging, particularly when we remember that the pre-war average of export was only 49,000 cwts. I have every hope that the mica industry will continue to progress satisfactorily in view of its increasing use in various branches of industries.

"I may take the liberty of referring here to two important enquiries which are being conducted on behalf of the Government and the results of which may affect our destinies in a large measure.

"The first of these enquiries relates to the modification of Income Tax law and its administration in this country for the examination of which the Government of India have requisitioned the services of two Experts from the Board of Inland Revenue. This Chamber has already submitted its Memorandum before the Committee and our representatives have also been orally examined. The announcement made by the Finance Member in introducing the Government of India Budget, raising the minimum limit of income tax assessment from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000, is a happy augury. This will automatically remove some of the hardships under which small assesses have been labouring. There is no doubt, however, that the law and its administration as at present do require important modifications and it is to be earnestly hoped that while amending the law, Government will take full account of the feeling in the country in respect of the carrying forward of losses, suitable allowances for depreciation, particularly on machinery running double shift and on wasting assets like coal mine, the removal of difficulties in the way of recognising partitions of the members of a Joint Hindu family although they may under the Hindu Law be actually separate, some allowance for the dependent members of the family, and the formation of an independent Appellate Authority on questions of fact.

Dealing with the question of Sir Otto Niemeyer's enquiry the Rao Bahadur said: "This Chamber has already submitted a Memorandum pointing out the financial disabilities under which this province has been labouring and has suggested certain remedies. It is to be earnestly hoped that the claims of this province will receive full consideration, and not only ample provision for suitable subvention will be made but that also when the time comes for a redistribution of Income tax receipts amongst the provinces, this re-distribution will be done on a basis which will not only take into account our large population but also make it possible for us to approach the standard of material advancement attained in the sister provinces like the U. P. and the Punjab. For the purpose of determining the standard of re-distribution this Chamber has suggested an admirable scheme which I earnestly commend to the consideration of Sir Otto Niemeyer.

"I should now, with your permission, deal with another question, that is in connection with the B. and N. W. Ry. since the time has now come when the Government must make up its mind whether or not to take over the management of this Railway under the terms of their contract, rather severe criticisms have late been directed against this railway service. The grievances of the travelling public have become almost classic and the representatives of the public on the Provincial and the Central Legislatures have vied with one another in condemning the present management of this railway. No doubt, the grievances do exist, but we must also recognize that improvements have been made and are under contemplation. For instance, it will be found that it has probably the second fastest passenger service on the meter gauge system in India.

"I may say a word here about the Chamber's policy and faith. This Chamber has been consistently and continuously co-operating with the Government and has always stood for a policy of reform by constitutional means, and there is no reason to suppose that it will ever deviate from that policy. No distinction of community, caste, or colour is observed in extending its services and membership, and to-day it is composed of corporations, firms and individuals represented by persons, Indian and European, Hindu and Muslim alike. The Chamber is now a recognised body of experts and is consulted both by the Government and the public, on all important questions affecting the public particularly the commercial community. Its members are invited to sit on special committees and to tender evidence before them. It has secured representations on important public bodies, like the E. I. Ry. Advisory Committee, the B. & N. W. Ry. Advisory Committee, the Senate, the Board of Industries, etc., and not the least of them, the Bihar Legislative Assembly under the new Reforms. In this latter connection, our best thanks are due to the Bihar Government which championed our cause and to the Committee presided over by Sir Lawrie Hammond which recognised the strength behind our just demand.

"Before I proceed to request your Excellency to declare this session open, I may be permitted to refer to one need of the Chamber. This Chamber is in the eleventh year of its existence and has been achieving progressively increased importance and recognition. The need for a suitable building to house it has been keenly felt for some time past in order to centralise and co-ordinate its activities. It has, therefore, been proposed to approach the Government for allotting a suitable plot of land where the Chamber's building may be constructed, and I earnestly hope and trust that the Government will give a favourable consideration to our request in this behalf.

## The S. I. Chamber of Commerce

The 26th. annual meeting of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce was held at Madras on the 30th. March 1936, *Sowcar Abdul Hakim Sahib* presiding. In the course of his speech moving the adoption of the annual report, *Sowcar Abdul Hakim*, the outgoing chairman said:—

We are yet in the depths of depression and what ray of hope was visible during the closing months of 1935 has been fading away. Prices and the purchasing power of the masses still remain at a low ebb. In this mood of gloom merchants are apt to be too susceptible to any and every circumstance tending to improve the situation and plunge into speculative dealings in the expectation of a boom. Such sporadic and ill-regulated enthusiasm is bound to retard still further any chances of return to normal conditions. The plethora of exchange clearing agreements, import quotas, high tariffs and other effective barriers to international trade have complicated the economic policy of every country and every attempt by the League of Nations to reduce the barriers has so far proved futile. The orgy of economic nationalism rules the world and each country has of course been paying and will continue to pay a heavy price in purchasing such a policy.

The import and export trade of India, as of other countries, has been suffering very badly. Our chief exports have been losing the customary markets. Our groundnut is losing in France, Germany and Italy; our castor-seed in the United States of America; our cotton and tanned hides and skins are struggling hard to retain the old markets. India cannot hope to retain those markets without concluding separate trade agreements with those countries and appointing competent Indian trade commissioners in those countries who would bring buyers and sellers together, popularise our products and watch the interests of Indian exports. It is of course very important also that indigenous banks should be helped to open branches abroad, transact exchange business and handle Indian goods in those markets when necessary. At the same time serious attempts should be made to cultivate the home market by all possible means such as reduction of railway freight, organisation of markets and propaganda, establishment of public warehouses etc. Transport charges are the biggest stumbling block to the promotion of inland trade and I am unable to appreciate the irrational attitude of port trusts which are still levying the post-war high port charges and harbour dues and deorcing the railways for making any freight

reductions to obtain more traffic. The railway administrations must drastically revise their rating policy in order to encourage overland transport. The Railway Board should not be content with merely making annual raids on the depreciation fund to feed the unrepentant railways but must take in hand the question of drastic economies in expenditure and of writing down the rates. Similarly each port would be well advised in reducing harbour dues and effecting economies.

It would have been so wise on the part of Government if they had adopted the policy of reducing the tax burden more wholeheartedly. Emergency taxes are raised to void deficits and when they bring surpluses Government are not expected to fritter them away on new schemes instead of abolishing the temporary levy. The surcharges on the income-tax and supertax, and on customs duties still remain although funds have been available to write them down. Such a policy betrays Government solicitude for the masses.

The indebtedness of the masses remains a huge problem : but I do not think that the country as a whole is going to be benefitted by debt conciliation schemes which seek to rob the creditor and feed the debtor. His Highness the Aga Khan has suggested the drastic step of reducing the rupee price to 1 sh. It cannot be denied that many advanced countries which reduced the exchange value of their currencies have been benefitted by it. It is also true that anticipating the Indian businessmen's predilection for the 16 d. rupee, Parliament have banged the door on the question. But there is no gainsaying the fact that Indian economic interests demand at least the restoration of the old exchange value of 16 d. in order to enable Indian producers to realise better prices without disturbing the world level of the prices or the position of Indian commodities in the world markets. The present condition of our export trade leaves much to be desired since it does not produce enough to pay our annual foreign obligation and consequently depends upon the ceaseless export of gold when all the world over there is such a scramble for gold and every attempt is made to conserve gold resources. The surplus of exports over imports was Rs. 16 crores in 1935. As against Rs. 25 crores in 1934 and Rs. crores in 1933 the export of gold was Rs. 44 crores, Rs. 60 crores and Rs. crores in those years respectively. That is why there is a public outcry that we are living on our capital resources. Neither have Government given any attention to the popular demand to reduce India's foreign obligations. Every year sterling loans are maturing ; money is very cheap, sterling resources are available. It would have been so easy for Government to raise cheap rupee loans and pay off the sterling loans. I think that the Reserve Bank, being a shareholders' bank, ought to interest itself in these matters of financial conservation.

## The Punjab Chamber of Commerce

Presiding over the 31st annual general meeting of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, held at New Delhi, on the 14th. April 1936, *Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee*, its Chairman, warmly welcomed the Hon. J. N. G. Johnson, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, who had shown continued interest in the Chamber.

After referring to the loss to the Empire in the death of King George, Mr. Mukherji briefly reviewed business conditions during the past year. He urged re-orientation of the whole policy of railway rating and also paying of such loans whereon interest was high with a view to improve railway finance.

The progress of civil aviation, he thought, was very slow. To ensure complete success of the Empire development scheme which was expected to be inaugurated in 1938, it was essential that mails within India should be carried by air at considerable frequency. Mr. Mukherjee criticised the Assembly's decision terminating the Ottawa Agreement and went on to demonstrate the fallacy of the decisions by examining the working of the agreement in some detail. He emphasised that each country was following the policy of agrarian self-sufficiency and international trade had been bettered. It was regrettable that a question of such vast moment to Indian trade had been influenced by considerations other than strictly economic.

Mr. Johnson, addressing the meeting, referred to the late King's Silver Jubilee Fund and the benefits which accrued to the Delhi Province therefrom. He announ-

and that her Excellency and her Committee had very kindly found it possible operating through the Central Association of Indian Red Cross to allot a further considerable sum for the establishment of King George V travelling dispensary to work continuously throughout rural areas in Delhi. The Chief Commissioner expressed gratitude to the Finance Member who found it possible, after ten years, to assign at least financial provision for removal of refuse and disposal of sewage, so vitally important to the residents of Delhi.

Turning to the Punjab State Aid to Industries Act, Mr. Johnson promised fullest examination of any representation on the matter submitted by the Chamber. The improvement and extension scheme for Delhi was now being investigated by a special officer and the question of special area for factories in Delhi would receive due consideration. Dealing with the Chamber's representation in the future legislature, he hoped that the opportunities offered to the representatives of the Chamber would be fully utilised. Concluding, Mr. Johnson joined in expressing gratitude and goodwill to Lord and Lady Willingdon.

## The Malabar Chamber of Commerce

The annual Conference of the Malabar Chamber of Commerce was held at Calicut on the 27th. June 1936. Mr. *Sami Venkatachalam Chetti*, in the course of his presidential speech, said that the commercial and economic questions now engrossed the attention of the world and Indians should study these problems almost unceasingly. The Chambers of Commerce all over the country should be strengthened and businessmen should treat these as part of their business organisations. They were aware that in the Government of India Act, a part of which was to come into force by next April, there was only one seat allotted to the commerce of the Presidency in the local Assembly and that that was given to the Southern India Chamber of Commerce. On that matter they had no doubt a grievance but he was an optimist and think that every thing happened was for the best. Nothing great was ever achieved without a grievance and he thought that this grievance of their would demolish the hedge round that field and really representative character be infused into it. He hoped that every trade would organise itself. Every functional and territorial organisation should be affiliated as members of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce.

There was yet another handicap in the qualification of a voter for the commerce constituency. That was that every voter should be an Income-Tax assessee for any year in five preceding years on an income of Rs. 10,000. That high qualification had made the representation plutocratic and deprived of some really capable businessmen of representation. Whatever might be the possibilities and failings of the new constitution, he added, it was imperative that the tried and tested Nationalists must capture the legislatures and seats of power.

He had no doubt, the speaker continued, that they heard with great relief the verdict of the Assembly to terminate the Ottawa Pact. Their pleasure was shared by businessmen all over the country, if not by all the contracting parties. The basic idea of that agreement was not what India should gain but the fear what she might lose. Their President, in his address, in May 1934, had said that "Ottawa Agreement had only diverted trade and had not given any stimulus to India's exports."

With England, he proceeded, their terms should be slightly different this time, preference being on the side of India. India was a debtor country to England. She imported not only her goods but also her nationals. England must take their products at world prices in payment of their charges. She must not expect to be paid in gold. In the trade agreements with Lancashire and Japan they had not made sufficient provision for keeping in tact the hand-weaving industry.

Adverting to socialism the speaker continued, it was a thorny subject with which he hesitated to deal excepting to state that the subject had not been well studied by protagonists and antagonists. That observation of his was itself the outcome of confused and contradictory views of the belligerents of the wordy war-fare. Recently they had had an interesting skirmish between the President of the Congress and

the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee. Both of them were said to have given their views on socialism in their extra official capacities. But the views of these dignitaries had given much room for some searchings of the heart in political and commercial circles. The history of big industry in this country, Mr. Sami part of the consumer and Venkatachalam continued, was one of heavy sacrifices on the grower of raw produce. They had willingly given their full co-operation in the hope that the industries would stand on their own legs in the near future and return the benefits to the country as a whole. Therefore proprietors of big business should look to the interests of the country first before they looked to their own profits.

In the impending renewal of the trade agreement with Japan unlike the last occasion, the whole range of competing Japanese imports must be taken into account such as hosiery, steel and cement and the favourable balance of trade.

Nearer home they were having pin pricks from Ceylon. The States of Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar were loudly complaining against Ceylonese dumping of coconuts and oil into India while Ceylon gnashed her teeth against what they called the ingratitude of the West Coast for the employment she was providing for many of her unwanted children. They had now a favourable trade balance with Ceylon and they should be chary of distributing it if only Ceylon had been mindful of proximity and affinity with the mainland. Being under a different constitution she had treated India almost as a foreign country, in fact a shade less favourable than the United Kingdom. Ceylon's import trade in goods manufactured in India was more with foreign countries than with India. She bought more hosiery, textiles and cement from foreign countries than from India. He hoped that storm in the tea pot would bring the two countries together and he had every hope that it would be so in that the President of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce was a South Indian who might be expected to appreciate the Indian point of view.

He found that the West Coast people were very fond of Ceylon tobacco and he hoped they paid for it by their delicious bananas. There was an agonising cry of unemployment particularly in this part of the country. He would venture to ask them if the possibility of tobacco plantation had been examined. Many waterways were neglected on account of railways. Since then most of the railways had become State concerns. The two railway systems in their presidency were still private concerns. The Assembly had recently recommended to the Government to absorb them on the completion of their term which is within the next five years. Their interest in the profits of these systems could not be wholehearted and the country might not feel impelled to give any co-operation to the Government in combating the keen competition of the road transport. Coasting trade could be further developed as Bombay was a vast market for coir, copra, tea, pepper and other spices. Rubber factories had sprung up in Karachi, Calcutta and Trivandrum. With the advantage of the Kerala Soap Institute the export trade in coconut oil and fish oil ought to be re-established.

Their internal trade suffered from several other impediments which fortunately were capable for removal and adjustability by the people themselves. Their information regarding each trade was hopelessly meagre and organisation of salesmanship was non-existent. Their credit facilities were simply archaic. He ventured to suggest that the Chambers of Commerce should depute committees and commissions to study the source of growth and possibilities of each trade and suggest methods of reconstruction and salesmanship in each trade. That reconstruction would, he thought, be able to absorb some thousands of intelligent young men.

Cochin Harbour had, though it affected Madras, brought them nearer Bombay and even the United Kingdom. Postal and Telegraph facilities had increased and he thought they must not be parsimonious in their praise of the Director-General and Sir Frank Noyce, despite their refusal to reduce the postage on cards, for the facilities they were providing the commercial community. They as members of Chambers of Commerce have a duty to their brethren to supply them with information on all commercial matters which in effect meant all matters, by means of trade journals. All Chambers of Commerce must combine to form a statistical research and publicity bureau, collect information, study and examine each trade and broadcast the result of their thinking and discovery.



# The All-India Trade Union Congress

15th. Session—Bombay—17th. May 1936

The 15th Session of the All-India Trade Union Congress opened at Kamgar Maidan, Bombay on the 17th. May 1936 in the presence of a large gathering of workers and Trade Unions leaders. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Congress President, together with other local Congressites and Socialists were present.

Mrs. Mulji Maniben Kara, President, and Mr. S. H. Jabawalla, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the course of their addresses, laid stress on the necessity for immediate unity in Labour ranks and forming an anti-Imperialist front of all elements in the country for fighting for independence. Both urged closer contact between Trade Unions and the Indian National Congress and welcomed Mr. Nehru's efforts in this direction. While Mr. Jabawalla wanted leaders of the National Trade Union Federation to give up their present attitude and go the whole hog for structural unity, Mrs. Maniben Kara was prepared to accept Mr. Giri's compromise proposal for a merger of the two wings of Labour for a year but urged Mr. Giri and his friends not to insist on three-fourths majority as regards a decision on political questions and suggested two-thirds majority instead. Both maintained that unity must be achieved as that alone would enable them to fight anti-working class forces.

Mr. Jabawalla drew attention to rationalisation and said that it was a serious menace to workers. What was needed in the circumstances was a national offensive of workers against offensive capitalists. The question of general strike of all industries had become a practical one. He regretted that at a time, when unity was essential, all efforts at Trade Union unity had failed. He blamed the leaders of the National Trade Union Federation for this failure and appealed to workers to bring pressure on their leaders. The immediate problem before them was how best to forge a powerful united front against Imperialism. This could be done only by co-operation with other organisations particularly the Indian National Congress. He advocated collective affiliation of Labour with the Indian National Congress and severely criticised the Congress for postponing a decision on the office question, which, in his opinion, should never have been considered at all, as the new constitution was not worth looking at.

Mrs. Maniben Kara, at the outset, referred to the incarceration of Messrs. Ruiker, Nimbkar and other Trade Union workers and then dealt at length with repression. She also devoted a considerable portion of her speech to the growth of Fascism in the world and indicated how it was a growing menace to the working class interests. She warned the Indian National Congress leaders that there were elements of Fascism within it which would show their heads if not checked in time. She next referred to war danger and welcomed Mr. Nehru's anti-war move and assured him of the co-operation of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

Mrs. Kara next dealt with the new constitution, characterised it as a "new charter of slavery" and said that it could be rejected only by mass action and not by creating constitutional deadlocks or much less by accepting ministerial offices. She advocated that a united front by all opposed to the new constitution must be built up immediately and the country's attention should be immediately focussed on the need for a Constituent Assembly which alone was competent to draw up a constitution for the country. The rejection of Reforms, she said, did not mean the boycott of councils, which should be used as propaganda platforms.

Regarding forthcoming elections she suggested the formation of a national democratic bloc consisting of all elements in the country opposed to new Reforms. It should be the endeavour of this bloc to enforce national, economic and political demands through the legislatures. If such a bloc was formed, she stated that the working classes would support the Congress candidates, provided they accepted the programme embodying the minimum demands of workers. She also urged the Congress to set up Labour candidates in predominantly labour areas. These preliminary activities would, however, have significance only if they reflected a far more rigorous mass movement outside and the immediate task in India to-day was the building up of most-broadbased and militant mass action. She had no doubt that the Indian National Congress was the best organisation to do this

because of its wide ramifications. Here again Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru had given a correct lead and the All-India Trade Union Congress, as the central organisation of militant working class movement in India, should establish relations of class co-operation with the Indian National Congress.

The President next dealt with dissensions in Labour ranks and briefly referred to the Nagpur split and subsequent efforts to repair the breach. She regretted that the National Trade Union Federation was not prepared for unity. If they could not have immediate structural unity, as the next best thing she suggested that the Trade Union Congress should accept Mr. Giri's proposal but hoped Mr. Giri would give up insistence on three-fourths majority for a decision on political issues and substitute two-thirds majority instead. She also hoped that both groups would be allowed freedom to carry on political propaganda. With such modifications Mr. Giri's proposals might be accepted as a penultimate step towards structural unity. She was guided in arriving at this conclusion by the supreme necessity to close up their ranks and give united resistance to the growing capitalist offensive.

Addressing the Congress, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru appealed to the working classes and the Trade Union Congress to establish closer contact with the Congress. The Congress was the only organisation in the country, he said, which had attempted to bring about a revolution. "You claim to be revolutionaries and raise revolutionary slogans, but they will not bring freedom," he added. "Although there is fundamental difference in the ideology and methods of working of the Indian National Congress and the Trade Union Congress, I firmly believe these two bodies can still work in unison in regard to many matters." Therefore he emphasised the need for closer contact.

"The existence of a foreign Government eclipsed many other issues and I believe that only political freedom can solve our difficulties," Mr. Nehru emphasised. He urged the workers to influence policy of the leaders and not to be mere blind followers. He also urged them to close up their ranks and bring about unity without sacrificing principles.

As regard talk about class struggle, Mr. Nehru said that no one liked it but mere dislike would not alter the facts since class struggle was there. It was, therefore, wrong to deny its existence. If the National Congress had ignored their grievances in the past, they had the right to criticise it but he warned them against indulging in mutual recriminations and a buse which would not be conducive to harmony and co-operation.

Several messages received from the League against Imperialism and other Associations were read at the Congress.

After the Chairman of the Reception Committee, the President, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Ashut Pattwardhan and Mr. Indulal Zagnik had addressed, the Congress passed a condolence resolution regarding Dr. Ansari's death and adjourned.

#### Resolutions—2nd. Day 18th. May 1936

The Congress took up consideration of the resolutions adopted by the executive committee. There were on the agenda paper nearly 30 resolutions, only five or six of which were duly moved and seconded while the rest were put from the chair and passed.

#### New Constitution

The first resolution to be moved was one strongly condemning the Government of India Act, declaring the determination of the working classes to adopt an attitude of irreconcilable hostility to the new Act, demanding a constituent assembly and emphatically declaring against office acceptance. Several speakers, including Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, supporting the resolution, condemned the Government of India Act and emphasised the need for agitation for a constituent assembly.

#### Suppression of Civil Liberties

The second resolution condemned the civil liberties and accorded support to the Indian National Congress in its move to form a Civil Liberties Union.

The third resolution condemned the continued repression, while the fourth demanded the immediate release of Messrs. Subhas Bose, Ruikar, Nimbar, M. N. Roy, Mukundlal Sircar and other labour leaders and detainees. The fifth sent greetings to the peasantry.

The seventh resolution condemned imperialist wars and called on the working classes to join hands with the Indian National Congress in conducting anti-war propaganda.

The eighth resolution sent greetings to the people of Abyssinia.

#### T. U. C. AND INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The ninth resolution defined the relations of the working classes and the Trade Union Congress with the Indian National Congress. It emphatically declared that the working classes must actively participate in the national movement and establish relations of close co-operation with the Indian National Congress with the object of broadening and deepening the national struggle for independence. Such co-operation was possible only if the Indian National Congress supported the working classes' immediate economic and political demands and made suitable provision for the participation of workers in the Congress through their class organisations. It urged affiliated unions to develop common action with the local Congress organisations in order to (1) reject the new constitution (2) oppose imperialist war, (3) defend the Soviet Union (4) defend civil liberties and (5) safeguard and advance the working class interests.

The tenth resolution welcomed the formation of the rapid growth of the Congress Socialist party and thanked the party and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru on the work done at Lucknow.

The eleventh resolution welcomed the Lucknow Congress resolution to establish closer relations between the National Congress and workers and peasants and urged the creation of a genuine anti-imperialist front.

The twelfth resolution demanded the collective representation of labour in the Indian National Congress through labour unions.

The thirteenth resolution defined the immediate programme and emphasised the need for structural unity in the trade union movement, the mobilisation and preparation of workers for a direct struggle on the basis of their vital political and economic demands, giving trade unions a live mass basis and training organizers to carry on trade union activity even under conditions of ruthless repression.

#### THREAT OF ALL-INDIA RAILWAY STRIKE

The next resolution protested against the railway administration's policy against workers and threatening an all-India railway strike.

Another resolution expressed the willingness of the Trade Union Congress to carry on electoral campaign with the National Congress provided the latter agreed to certain demands of the working classes such as setting up a labour candidate in a predominantly labour area and other labour and economic demands.

#### QUESTION OF MERGER WITH N. T. U. F.

The next resolution expressed the unqualified preparedness of the All-India Trade Union Congress to accommodate in a spirit of conciliation the demands of the National Trade Union Federation on all such issues as would not hamper the growth of the struggle of the working classes and accepted Mr. Giri's compromise proposal for a merger as the basis of unity subject to the following provision, namely, the constitution of the National Trade Union Federation be accepted with such modification as may be necessary by the executive committee of the T. U. C. later on, provided that where it was not possible to take any decisions on a political issue or a strike for want of a three-fourth majority, the T. U. C. be free to act according to its bare majority opinions, in case the Federation insists on taking independent action in connection with such political questions or strike.

The session concluded amidst enthusiastic scenes late at night after all the resolutions had been passed.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

On the conclusion of the Trade Union Congress session, the following office-bearers were elected for the coming year:—Mr. Shivanath Banerjee of Calcutta, president; Messrs. R. B. Khedigeker, R. S. Ruikar, Narayandas Benbar and Rajaram Shastri vice-presidents; Mrs. Maniben Mulji, general secretary; and Mr. V. B. Karnik, treasurer. Mr. R. B. Khedigeker to act as president instead of Mr. Shivanath Banerji, who was in jail.

# The Indian Economic Conference

19th. Session—Dacca—2nd. January 1936

The nineteenth Session of the Indian Economic Conference was held at Dacca on the 2nd. January 1936, under the presidentship of Mr. Manohar Lal of Lahore. In the course of his address Mr. Manohar Lal said :—

In the world to-day economic problems are of such growing imperiousness, and the situation of our great and unhappy, because divided and poor, country so grave that I venture to press on your attention a few reflections on the task of the economist in India.

The brilliant French social thinker, Siegfried, diagnoses the broad features of the crisis of 1929 and since, in this significant manner : "First there was the liquidation of the war, which, contrary to the general illusion, had not been already fully carried out. The main difficulty was to absorb an over-expanded industrial equipment. While Europe was fighting, the rest of the world feverishly equipped itself in order to supply the needs of the belligerents and to cope with their withdrawal from the international markets. After the war, however, Europe in turn wished to recapture what she had lost." And we are now watching Europe's intense struggle—made harder by tariff barriers, and currency confusion. In Japan, low wages exist with remarkable superiority of technique and that makes it all but impossible for the West to compete. The present conditions of world competition are frankly recognised by many in Europe as marks of defeat. A general depression has spread over the face of Europe and no sure indications of escape are visible. Admirable and certain diagnoses of the causes of economic disablement have been made in works of high authority and unquestioned disinterestedness but no trustworthy feasible cure is anywhere suggested because political conditions—the strains and stresses of the present European state system—make deliberate and concerted action extremely difficult.

In such world conditions our eyes turn with natural anxiety to the governing factors in our own Indian economy. We have not escaped from sharing fully in the evil effects of the world-wide depression, and the essential weakness of our position has become acutely apparent because of our inability to withstand the strain of the crisis. Our excessive dependence on agriculture, and our poor industrial development caused deplorable distress, and our exiguous finances made many of the usual escapes from economic hardship extremely difficult. The people and the Government were equally helpless. It may be confidently asserted that in no country in the world, certainly in no large country, has governmental endeavour to remedy depression and secure recovery been so utterly non-existent as in India,—for small efforts at improvement in our agricultural departments, and the grant of discriminating protection to some industries constitute no part of any special programme to beat down the swelling tide of depression.

Agricultural forces are determined by world conditions under the influence of these important prices ; and these world-determined prices have to be accepted by us here where holdings are small and economic conditions of production necessarily primitive. Our dependence on agriculture is increasing, and in the exchange of our agricultural products against the world's industrial products and transport services, our disadvantage as that of all agricultural countries is growing. This constitutes a grave and fundamental problem of Indian economics to-day. The great tragedy of our deteriorating economic position is our utter helplessness. We cannot offer any solution of the vast and universal problem of agricultural depression, for no one country or people can furnish any effective remedy where the causes of the evil are so wide-spread and deep-seated ; but we seem not to be doing anything even towards any long-sighted relief of our own troubles.

Prof. Brij Narain in his recent book "India Before the Crisis" in his study of our population problem has pointed out that "the problem of relieving the growing pressure on the soil is insoluble," for "the modernisation of Indian agriculture is impossible unless it is preceded by a very great development of industries." That is obvious enough, but it may be doubted whether even if large development of industries could be achieved, a remote ideal towards which no substantial progress

is being made, there would be much room for modernisation of agriculture with our small and fragmented holdings and system of land ownership. India must either restrict her population, or import food from abroad. Our increase of population during the last census decade was described by Dr. Hutton, the Census Commissioner, as "a cause of alarm." It has been often said by sober statisticians in official documents that "for all practical purposes, it may be taken as proved that India as a whole is already overpopulated." *Major-General Megaw*, a most cautious and competent authority, in calling attention recently to the fact of our extremely low average duration of life in India and our low level of health and comfort observed: "There is some difference of opinion as to whether conditions of life have improved or deteriorated during the past fifty years, but even if some slight improvement may have taken place, the existing state of affairs is still so *profoundly unsatisfactory* that it demands investigation and redress," and uttered the warning that forecast for the future is even more disquieting; there is "a prospect of a *steady deterioration* in the nutrition of the people."

Now it may be argued that over-population is a relative term, and that it refers to the system of economy as established at any particular time. Change the economy, and the threat of overpopulation disappears. But we must look to the existing circumstances, and what is in near prospect having regard to existing facts and likely changes. In this view, we are liable to all the nature's violent modes of restoring balance. For restriction by foresight is a remote, far too remote, means of relief, for a people steeped in ignorance and superstition. And apart from the danger of restriction proving dysgenic, the scope of its application seems to lie more in the relief possibly of middle-class difficulties than in furnishing a solution of our national economic difficulties.

The problem of population is not merely one of their being not enough to go round. It implies also all the misery and economic waste involved in futile child birth and infant and maternal mortality. And we cannot afford this waste. Final conclusions are difficult to propound. Theoretical speculations furnish no guidance for exact immediate prophecies but here in India there appears little doubt that (i) nature has to establish equilibrium by her painful and violent methods of disease, famine and pestilence, and (ii) man does the same by accepting a low level of life even if we may not say that the level is being steadily depressed. In this connection, the words of Professors Bowley and Robertson are most significant. "Evidence seems to be that population tends to grow up to improvements effected in environment so as to bring the standard of life again down to the old level." "Improvements in public health also result in increased population pressure for the future." What a sad conclusion! In our poverty and the extreme pressure of population on the soil, even the beneficent activities of a human department are not an unmixed blessing. The professors on a broad view conclude that the population problem is the gravest of India's problems. They favour the view that "in India at all events the population problem is still a problem of writing sufficient subsistence from the soil, while in any case rapid industrialisation might stimulate a greater growth of population than it could absorb," and the supreme question disengages itself "whether economic or social forces making for a reasonable balance between population and production are working with sufficient strength."

In New Zealand, the evil is fully realised in an official publication where the necessity of diverting some of her population to new local industries is stressed, and baring the imports of all articles she can produce at home advocated.

In Japan, in spite of all the difficulties of industrialisation in a country with no iron, no cotton and poor coal supplies, the policy is clearly defined, and it is recognized that the building up of trade and industry alone can furnish a solution of the population problem. She has learnt a sure lesson from the classical example of England that increasing population needs securing food from outside in exchange for the products of industry and transport and financial services. And Japan's example furnishes us a lesson.

In this connexion we should not forget one important fact. It is obvious that our trade policy is easily summed up in three words: a certain measure of Discriminating Protection, the Fiscal Autonomy Convention, the Ottawa Pact and its implications; and the question of forging a bold and comprehensive trade policy of building up industries has never been faced in India. It has, however, to be admitted that stress of circumstance has led to a significant change in the policy of the Indian Government regarding manufacturing industries. But it has been boldly asserted by a careful economist that "the industrial development of India is proceed-

ing on wrong lines" in so much as "we have almost entirely neglected the manufacture of capital goods." And he has called attention to a matter that deserves particular reflection and close study. He says: "under the existing system, the proportion of the population dependent on industry tends to decline with the progress of factory industries. The introduction of machinery causes unemployment in India while it creates means of employment in other countries."

What is being achieved, if not actually achieved in Japan, should be possible for India. We have an immense population and therefore ready demand for manufactured goods. We have an immense market which the whole world is trying to secure, yet in spite of our unbounded resources we continue hapless victims of world's dumping.

On the vital issue nearly all necessary quantitative thinking has been done, the nature of evil analysed, and the possible remedies defined. But all this can form only a starting point, and the task of the economist is to study in detail the extent of relief in varying circumstances that can result from (i) improvements in agriculture, (ii) voluntary restriction on the growth of population, (iii) increase in industrialisation in full view of the situation in the West. These are three main factors which require close quantitative study under a large number of assumptions of possibilities. Round these would naturally group a considerable mass of subsidiary problems concerned with diet, nutrition, public health and disease. It is gratifying that detailed consideration of this vital problem will now have the advantage of an expert body of students in the newly organised Population Conference to be shortly held at Lucknow.

The approaching reforms have forced pointed attention to the rigidity of our revenues, and the narrowness of our finances, for reforms mean increased expenditure, and our provinces have not even now the means of making proper or adequate provision for beneficent or nation-building activities. Narrow exiguous finance is merely the reflection of the poverty of the country and its ill-balanced economic structure. Serious students of Indian economics have recently stressed with growing intensity the excessive nature of our land revenue burden, a main source of provincial income; while even with this burden, and without contemplating any relief in this regard, our Provincial Finance Members are in despair as to any fruitful schemes of improving their revenues. The resourcefulness of government experts, individual and in committees, is exhausted in merely canvassing adjustments; hardly a single additional or farther source of revenue is suggested, while provincial governments press for a larger share of what the Central Government absorbs at present. The pessimistic tone of experts, and the frantic advocacy of individual provincial claims is a saddening fact—it is the rock on which plans of federation and realities of reform may easily split. No solution is in sight. The Central Government's sources of net income are just three-fold; Customs, Income-tax and Salt, and the pitch to which each has been carried in recent years, affords no prospect of substantial improvement in income by any large enhancement of rates.

In this a cynic may, perhaps, see a ray of hope, because as our trade policy underwent a considerable transformation under the necessities of the war, the exigencies of conducting government under reforms may further compel our rulers to think of and devise means to secure healthier economy for India. The limits of revenue from land have been long reached, growing pressure of rural opinion cannot fail to make itself felt on preventing any increase of burden on land, even if it does not succeed in securing reduction of various direct and indirect land revenue charges. All hope of improvement must therefore rest on Customs and Income-tax which depend directly on industry and trade. The development of industry and trade, then, is necessary to keep our finances in balance and absolutely essential if any even urgent programmes of national advance are to be carried out.

Here perhaps I may be permitted to say that in our steadfast gaze on the absolutely necessary ideal of vigorous and healthy modern industry, we ought not to allow our attention to be diverted by fanciful pictures of cottage industries as the solution of our economic ills. The cottage industries may have their legitimate place in our village economy,—on that I wish to say nothing. But they furnish no means of providing thirty-seven crores of people with an adequate standard of living.

In the past few years, the weakness of our position in foreign trade has become strikingly apparent, and the heavy exports of "distress gold" at a time when central banking institutions all over the world have been making determined, well-nigh frantic efforts to amass gold, raise vital questions of currency policy; they also constitute a sad comment on our economic position. With the deterioration in her international trade position, it can no longer be affirmed that India is able to meet her debt obligations abroad and her 'home charges'.

What will happen if the forecasts of scientific men come true? Professor J. B. S. Haldane recently remarked that "by 1944 prices of food will fall so much that large numbers of agricultural states would go to ruin." The course of events during the past twenty years warrants the general soundness of this prophecy. Do we realize the import of this fast approaching fate on unhappy India maintaining one of world's largest populations on her own agriculture and struggling to buy manufactured goods from abroad at growing disadvantage?

The economist in India to-day is worthily engaged in the close study of economic fact and theory. But I venture to think that his most urgent task now is more than ever before, to rouse the conscience of both the people and the government to a consciousness of the peril towards which we are drifting and to the necessity of straining every nerve to reconstruct our economic life. Events are marching with such swiftness, the rest of the world with their alert governments is taking such rapid action, that if we are not up and doing now, aware of the possible dangers ahead and determined on the one course of salvation, our doom may be irretrievably sealed. That is the supreme task of the Indian economist—he is faced by a task which if missed to-day may never come again.

#### FINANCE OF THE FEDERATION

Several interesting papers concerning fiscal questions were read in the afternoon session. Mr. S. F. Aiyar (Dacca University) read a paper on "Some aspects of the new constitution for India". He said that he disagreed with the view that in regard to fiscal questions the position under the new constitution would be worse than now and examined the constitutional position in the matter of the fiscal convention.

In indicating the additional estimated burden on the people of India by bringing into force the new constitution Mr. Aiyar said: India requires at the present time a new orientation in matters of public policy towards the economic betterment of the citizens, to diminish unemployment, to stimulate production and trade, to develop schemes of social insurance even as many other nations are doing. We want a programme—comprehensive and practical—but increasing expenditure in duplicating unnecessary and mischievous political machinery without any real power to regulate freely income or expenditure to the advantage of India is an avoidable luxury. India must again look only to additional taxation for expenditure on the social services which are so urgently necessary in India to-day.

Mr. B. N. Ganguly, of the Hindu College, Delhi, in the course of his paper on "The Fiscal Autonomy Convention under the new Constitution", observed that although India's right to develop her own fiscal and economic policy and to negotiate trade agreements had been recognised, discriminatory or penal treatment of British goods had been defined so widely as to make this safeguard as effective as possible. As a result, the extent of India's Fiscal Autonomy would be very ill-defined and arbitrary.

In his paper on the "Fiscal Prospects of the Indian Federation," Mr. M. K. Muniswami observed *inter alia* that the financial provisions concerning the Native States seemed to err on the side of generosity. The Joint Parliamentary Committee itself recognised that it was difficult to reconcile the Treaties of the States with any practical scheme of Federal finance. The financial settlement under the Act of 1935 was wanting in uniformity not only between British India and the States as such but between one State and another. Burdens and benefits were unequal under the proposed Federation. Besides giving an undue weight in Indian affairs to the States the proposed settlement would saddle the Federal Government with increased expenditure to be financed by declining receipts of revenue. From the economic standpoint the States would gain immensely from their entry into the Federation.

Discussing the finances of the proposed Federation, Mr. Muniswami expressed the fear that it might split on the rock of finance.

He maintained that the position in regard to fiscal question would be, on the whole, worse under the new constitution than what it was to-day. The particular special responsibility conferred upon the Governor-General for the prevention of commercial discrimination against British imports into India constituted a menace to the Fiscal Autonomy Convention and was a definitely reactionary departure from the spirit of the report of the Joint Select Committee of 1919 and of the reply of the late Mr. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, to the Leicestershire deputation of 1921. Although the scope of the Convention was rather indefinite it was undeniable that under this convention India had enjoyed a certain amount of freedom in respect of fiscal matters. The Fiscal Convention was now in danger as a result of the new Act.

Discussing the nature of legislative control over Federal expenditure he remarked

that non-votable expenditure would constitute over 80 per cent of the total expenditure of the Federal Government. The bulk of federal expenditure would, therefore, be beyond the control of the Federal Legislature. In one respect it would be worse, for, under the present constitution the power of restoration in respect of rejected votable grants was exercisable by the Governor-General-in-Council, whereas under the proposed constitution it would be exercisable by the Governor-General alone in the exercise of the individual judgment.

Mr. P. S. Lokanatham (Madras), in his paper on "The Structure of Industry in India", suggested that in spite of the theoretical superiority of large-scale industries in practice it was found that many of the small industries had survived either due to some inherent defects in transport and marketing, or to the fact that in a land of small farming like India, cottage industries were supplementary occupations which did not have to bear full overhead charges or pay full wages, because they did not need any expensive capital and could be carried on during the off season. He thought that it would be possible for India to develop village industries with the aid of modern appliances and cheap electrical power.

Dr. Radha Kamal Mukherjee (Lucknow University), dealing with Indian handicrafts, classified them according to structure and organisations. In most of the cottage arts and crafts carried on as subsidiary to agriculture and village subsistence industries, he found that the artisan dealt directly with the consumer and worked with his own materials. There was the piece wage system in which the artisan dealt with the consumer with material supplied by the latter as in the case of wood-work, gold and silver-work and dress-making. In pottery, wood-carving, silk, carpet and blanket weaving, Dr. Mukherjee had found a survival of the medieval guild system in some places.

Mr. J. W. Thomas (Lahore), in his "Note on Japanese Industry" said that the Japanese industrialists were ahead of Indian manufacturers in effective, collective organisations. Compulsory education in Japan had played an important part in the efficiency of the Japanese worker. He deplored the immense waste of human life and energy in this country and lack of proper help in the matter of economic development.

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar (Calcutta University), in his paper on "The theory of wages in the light of social insurance and public finance", said that in view of the existence of widely prevalent measures of State interference to regulate the earnings of labour, the wages paid in the course of employment were far below the standard of 'fair wages', and that, therefore, economic factors were not only factors in the determination of wages in a modern community. He concluded that the existence of social insurance and other methods of transference of wealth from the rich to the poor was both a critique and a corrective of the system of wages. He also drew the further inference that economic theory alone could not explain the cause of fair wages, but that, for an adequate explanation, we must fall back upon moral factors, political considerations, social institutions and other non-economic forces.

Dr. H. L. Dey (Dacca), discussing "Low wages and unfair competition in International Trade", showed that only when the efficiency-wages ratio in a certain country was higher than the corresponding ratio of another country, then the first country could produce goods cheaper than the second, and that this could be done both by high-wage and low-wage countries. He admitted, however, that there were undoubtedly larger stretches of employment areas in what were called backward countries, where wages were abnormally low in the sense of being below the expenses of the customary standard of living, either because of the absence of mobility of labour between industry and industry or because of a rapid growth in the supply of unskilled labour through unrestricted growth of population as in Japan and India, for instance. But, he suggested that tariffs and other penal measures against such countries could not remove these abnormal conditions, but would only tend to aggravate them. The proper remedy, he suggested, was the promotion of indirect mobility and demand through international trade, international loans for economic development and international regulation of hours and conditions of work.

Dr. K. B. Saha (Dacca), in his paper on "Wages and Costs in International Trade", referred to the doctrine prevalent in certain quarters that low-wage countries should be prevented from underselling in high-wage countries. Dr. Saha said that though the influx of some cheaper goods from a low-wage country might compel a reorganisation of industries in the high-wage country through transfer of labour and capital and thus inflict a temporary loss and suffering on certain sections of its people, it would ultimately derive a net benefit by an enlargement of the national dividend.



**Reports on**

**THE HAMMOND COMMITTEE**

**THE NEIMEYER COMMITTEE**

**and**

**The Sapru Unemployment Committee**



# The Hammond Committee Report

## On the Delimitation of Constituencies

The Report of the Hammond Committee on Delimitation of Constituencies, which was a unanimous document, was published from New Delhi on the 2nd March 1933.

On the question of urban versus rural areas, the Committee have dealt with each Province individually, securing that the proposals, among other things, were so framed that rural areas would not be dominated by urban elements, and at the same time, ensuring that urban areas received the full representation to which they are entitled.

In all Provinces, except Bombay and Madras, single member constituencies have been accepted as a rule, save where the multi-member constituency is necessitated by reservation of seats for scheduled castes or backward tribes.

The method of voting recommended is cumulative voting in all multi-member territorial constituencies, except in certain specified constituencies.

### TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES

Dealing with territorial constituencies, the Committee have assigned for Madras 15 general and 2 Mahomedan seats for urban areas, the basis for conclusion in urban areas being combination of not more than two towns of substantial size in the same district. As for Bombay, 14 general seats and 6 Mahomedan seats have been allotted to urban areas.

Only the biggest cities, which have genuinely urban characteristics, and whose problems and interests are different from, or likely to conflict with, those areas, classed as rural, have been included in the urban category.

In Bengal, 12 general and 6 Mohamedan seats have been assigned to urban representation.

In the Punjab, the problem of rural versus urban has been greatly to the fore.

The Committee have decided that all towns with a population of not less than 7,500 and Cantonnments and District Headquarters and first class Municipalities are to be included in urban areas.

### IN MADRAS

The report on territorial constituencies relating to Madras is the following :

The Committee have assigned 15 general and 2 Mahomedan seats to urban areas, the basis for inclusion in urban being a combination of not more than two towns of substantial size in the same district. The Committee have recommended two multi-member urban constituencies and a certain number of multi-member rural constituencies, the constituencies ordinarily containing not more than two unreserved seats.

The following areas have been included in the general urban constituencies : Madras, Vizagapatam, Cocanada, Masulipatam, Bezwada, Guntur, Tenali, Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Madura, Tinnevely, Palamcottah, Coimbatore, Salem and Trichinopoly. Srirangam, Madras City, Calicut, Cannanore and Tellicherry have been included in Mahomedan constituencies.

### SCHEDULED CASTES

As regards scheduled caste constituencies, the Committee recommend that except in Bengal, there is to be no restriction on a member of the scheduled castes from contesting in an unreserved seat in the constituency where there is a reserved seat. In Bengal, however, no member of the scheduled castes, not elected at the Primary Election, is to be qualified to hold a seat in a constituency, where there is a general seat reserved for the scheduled castes.

In Madras, out of 30 seats allotted for the scheduled castes, one has been reserved for a constituency in the City of Madras and the remaining 29 to rural areas ; in Bombay 2 to Bombay City and 13 to rural areas ; in Bengal all the 30 seats have been assigned to rural areas in the five constituencies of Khulna, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri-cum-Siliguri, Rangpur and Faridpur. Two seats are reserved for the scheduled castes in United Provinces ; 4 out of 20 seats reserved for the scheduled castes

have been allotted to Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra and Allahabad Cities. The remaining 16 are allotted to rural areas, where scheduled castes preponderate.

In the Panjab, Bihar, Assam and Orissa all seats are reserved in rural constituencies (there are no urban constituencies in Assam and Orissa). In the Central Provinces the scheduled castes of Nagpur City have been allotted a seat.

#### WOMEN CONSTITUENCIES

As regards women, the Committee have recommended the formation of special constituencies in selected areas. Their constituencies are generally in urban areas, though in Madras, Bombay and United Provinces, a few seats have also been allotted in rural areas.

The Committee also recommend enfranchisement in University constituencies of members of the Senate or Court, and all registered graduates of not less than seven years' standing.

Regarding landholders, territorial constituencies have been formed for filling seats for them in all Provinces, except in the United Provinces where of six seats reserved for them 4 are to be filled by the British Indian Association and two by the Agra Zamindars' Association.

The Report deals next with Commerce constituencies. The main basis of delimitation recommended is membership of an Association as a more appropriate qualification, but in cases where membership of a single Chamber or of one or two more Chambers is qualification for vote in the Commerce constituency, then such members should, in addition, in case of incorporated companies possess a paid-up capital of not less than one lakh of rupees, and in the case of a firm or individuals have been, in any of the five income-tax years immediately preceding the preparation of electoral roll, assessed to an income-tax on income derived from trade, commerce or industry of not less than Rs. 10,000.

As regards seats for Commerce in Madras, four seats have been allotted to European Commerce and two to Indian Commerce. The Madras Chamber of Commerce and the Madras Trades Association will, between them, have three seats and the Madras Planters, Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Nattukottai Nagarathars' Association, each one seat. The Andhra Chamber of Commerce will not be enfranchised.

#### LABOUR

As regards Labour the Committee have accepted the principle that constituencies for Labour seats should partly be in organised Labour constituencies and partly in unorganised Labour constituencies. The Committee have achieved this in all cases, except in Orissa and Sind. Thus Trade Unions have been given 2 seats in Madras, 6 in Bombay, 3 in Bengal and one each in the United Provinces, Panjab, Bihar and Central Provinces. The remaining 24 seats have been assigned to unorganised labour of which one seat in Bengal and all 4 seats in Assam have been assigned to Tea Garden Labour. In the case of Tea Garden Labour, the Committee have accepted the principle of rotation for the sake of obtaining direct election.

#### IN BACKWARD AREAS

One chapter is devoted to backward areas and tribes. The Committee recommend that 4 out of 5 seats allotted to backward areas and tribes in Orissa are to be filled by nomination. Seats assigned in Bombay and Bihar and one seat in Orissa are to be filled by direct election from multi-member general constituencies with 1 seat reserved for backward tribes. Madras, Central Provinces and Assam are to have special constituencies for election to these seats. In Assam, there are to be 4 seats for backward tribes and five for backward areas.

The Committee have accepted the proposals of Local Governments in regard to delimitation of constituencies for Provincial Legislatures and Federal Council of State. As for Federal Commerce seats, the recommendations of Local Governments are accepted in the case of provincial seats. The Non-provincial seat is to be filled by an electorate comprising the Northern Indian Chamber of Commerce, Panjab Chamber and Upper Indian Chamber. Delhi will have one general and one Mahomedan seat, while Ajmere-Merwara will have one general seat.

Personation in election is to be made cognisable, otherwise there is no change in the law relating to corrupt practices.

### Summary of Recommendations

The following is the summary of recommendations of each chapter beginning from the second.

Chapter II : In distinguishing urban from rural areas it was impracticable to secure uniformity. The only course open was to deal with each Province individually securing that the proposals put forward,

- (I) had the support of the decided bulk of public opinion ;
- (II) were so framed that rural areas would not be dominated by urban elements
- (III) ensured that urban areas received the full representation to which they were entitled, and in any case, in which weightage was given to urban areas, that that weightage was not greater than was appropriate ; and
- (IV) were void of conspicuous anomalies.

#### SINGLE OR MULTI-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES

Chapter III : In all Provinces, save Bombay and Madras, single member constituencies should be accepted as a rule, save where a multi-member constituency is necessary by reservation of seats for scheduled castes or backward tribes. In Bombay, where the public demand for multi-member constituencies is really strong, the principle of multi-member constituencies may be accepted. A certain number of multi-member constituencies, containing not more than two unreserved seats, may also be created in Madras.

The method of voting will be, save as otherwise stated, cumulative voting in all multi-member territorial constituencies, single non-transferable vote in Bihar general constituencies, where a seat is reserved for backward tribes, also in the Behrampur constituency in Orissa and the Singhum Constituency in Bihar.

#### TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES FOR MADRAS

Chapter IV : The Committee have assigned 15 General and 2 Mahomedan seats to urban areas, the basis for inclusion in urban areas being a combination of not more than two towns of substantial size in the same district. The Committee have recommended two multi-member urban constituencies, and a certain number of multi-member rural constituencies, the constituencies ordinarily containing not more than two unreserved seats.

The following areas have been included in General urban constituencies : Madras, Vizagapatam, Cocanada, Masulipatam, Bezvada, Guntur; Tenali, Tanjore, Kumbakonam, Madurai, Tinnevely, Palamcottah, Coimbatore, Salem and Trichinopoly. Srirangam, Madras City, Calicut, Cannanore and Tellicherry have been included in Mahomedan urban constituencies.

In Bombay, 14 General seats and 6 Mahomedan seats have been allotted to urban areas, only the biggest cities which have genuinely urban characteristics and whose problems and interests are different from or likely to conflict with those of the areas classed as rural have been included in the urban category. Areas included in the general urban constituencies are the Cities of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat and Rander, Poona and Sholapur. Mahomedan Urban areas are the Cities of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat and Rander. The Committee have given one Mahomedan urban seat to Surat and Rander cities.

#### OTHER PROVINCES

In Bengal, all Municipalities which are subjected to the provisions of the Bengal Municipal Act, the Calcutta Municipal Act, and the Cantonment of Barrackpore and Town of Kharagpore, which is not enjoying Municipal Self-Government, are included in the general urban area and only selected Municipalities. In Mahomedan urban constituencies, 12 General and 6 Mahomedan seats have been assigned to urban representation.

In the United Provinces, the number of seats allotted to urban areas being a town with a population of 25,000 and over.

In the Punjab the number of seats allotted to urban areas being all towns with a population of not less than 7,500 Cantonments, District Headquarters and First Class Municipalities.

In Bihar the number of seats allotted to urban areas is General 5, Mahomedan 5, the basis for inclusion in urban areas being all municipal notified and Government areas.

In the Central Provinces and Berar the number of seats allotted to urban areas is General 10, Mahomedan 2, the basis for inclusion in urban areas being all Municipalities and Towns with a population of 1,00,000 and over. The number of seats allotted to the Central Provinces, is General 64, Mahomedan 8.

The number of seats allotted to Berar is General 20, Mahomedan 6.

In Assam, the number of urban constituencies, in Assam Valley, General 33, Mahomedan 13, Burma Valley, General 15, Mahomedan 21. In the North-West Frontier Province, the number of seats allotted to urban constituencies is General 3, Mahomedan 3, Sikhs 3, general urban constituencies being Peshawar, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan and Mahomedan constituencies being Peshawar City and Cantonment, Risalpur and Nowshera Cantonments, the Municipalities and Cantonments of Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Abbottabad, with the two Cantonments of Madran and Cherat.

The number of urban constituencies in Sind and the number of seats allotted to urban areas are General 3, Mahomedan 2. The General areas are Karachi and Hyderabad cities; and the Mahomedan area, Karachi.

#### SCHEDULED CASTES

Chapter V :—The Poona Pact points are (i) The number 4 is to be neither a maximum, nor a minimum, but an optimum; (ii) Withdrawals cannot be prevented; (iii) Except in Bengal, there is to be no restriction on a member of the scheduled castes from contesting an unreserved seat in a constituency where there is a reserved seat. In Bengal, however, no member of the scheduled castes, not elected at the primary election, to be qualified to hold a seat in a constituency where there is a general seat reserved for scheduled castes.

The method of voting in general constituencies containing reserved seats for scheduled castes is to be cumulative. If two panel candidates head the poll at the final election, the first is to be declared elected for the reserved seat and the second for the non-reserved seat.

Summary trials of petitions connected with primary election are to be tried by District Magistrates and disposed of summarily and the decision is not liable to be set aside either by any court or any higher executive authority. Disqualification of any person on account of corrupt practices is to be capable of removal by the Governor. The deposit, which will cover both primary and final scheduled caste candidates, is to be Rs. 50, the deposit for demanding summary trial Rs. 200, the deposit for questioning the validity of final election Rs. 1000. Scheduled caste candidates will have to file return of election expenses.

In Madras, out of 30 seats, 1 seat has been allotted to a constituency in the City of Madras and the remaining 29 seats to rural areas.

In Bombay 15 seats are reserved for scheduled castes. The Committee have allotted 2 to the City of Bombay and 13 to rural areas.

In Bengal all the 30 seats are assigned to rural areas in 5 constituencies, 2 seats are reserved for scheduled castes.

In the United Provinces, 4 out of 20 seats reserved for scheduled castes have been allotted to Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra and Allahabad Cities, the remaining 16 reallocated to rural areas where the scheduled castes preponderate.

In the Punjab, Bihar, Assam and Orissa all the seats are reserved in rural constituencies. In Assam and Orissa, as stated above, there are no urban constituencies.

In the Central Provinces the scheduled castes of Nagpur City have been allotted a seat.

#### WOMEN'S CONSTITUENCIES

Chapter VI :—The Committee have recommended the formation of special constituencies in selected areas. The constituencies are generally in urban areas, though in Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces, a few seats have also been allotted to rural areas.

The Committee have also made some suggestions regarding the facilities given for the registration of, and voting by women, qualifications of candidates being a woman who possesses the necessary franchise qualifications, which would entitle her to a vote in any constituency in the Province, the communal qualification and the qualifications prescribed in Para 1 of the Fifth Schedule to the Government of India Act.

#### UNIVERSITY

Chapter VI :—The Committee have recommended enfranchisement in the university constituencies of members of the Senate or Court and all registered graduates of not less than seven years' standing.

## LANDHOLDERS

Chapter VIII:—In all Provinces except the United Provinces, territorial constituencies have been formed for the filling of seats allotted to landholders. In the United Provinces, the 6 seats assigned to landholders' 4 will be filled by the British Indian Association and 2 by the Agra Zamindars' Association. For the purposes of election, membership will in the U. P. be confined to persons paying land revenue of not less than Rs. 10,000 per annum.

## COMMERCE

Chapter IX:—The main basis of delimitation recommended is that the membership of an Association should be deemed a more appropriate qualification, that out of a number of competing bodies such alone should be selected as truly represent substantial commercial interests and that a single authoritative body, wherever possible, should be concentrated upon; the combination of unrelated and dissimilar organisations should be avoided. In cases where the membership of a single chamber or of one of two or more chambers is a qualification for a vote in a commerce constituency, then such members should, in addition (1) in the cases of incorporated companies possess a paid-up capital of not less than Rs. 1 lakh, and (2) in the case of a firm or individuals have been in any one of the five income-tax years immediately preceding the preparation of the electoral roll assessed to income-tax on an income derived from trade, commerce or industry of not less than Rs. 10,000.

No Association, affiliated to a Chamber, is to have more than one vote. The remedy to meet frequent changes in the personnel of firms or a firm or a Hindu joint family concern or a Corporation included in the electoral roll of a Commerce constituency may be to nominate representatives not exceeding three who shall be entered to vote for such a Hindu joint family concern, incorporated company or Corporation.

As a remedy to keep outsiders from representing Commerce constituencies, it is provided that such representatives shall be a person who would otherwise be eligible to sign on behalf of the individual or company in the ordinary course of business. Registering and returning officers should invariably be Government officers.

In Madras 4 seats have been allotted to the European Commerce and 2 to Indian Commerce, the Madras Chamber of Commerce and the Madras Trades Association will between them have 3 seats and the Madras Planters, the Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Nattukottai Nagarathars' Association, each one seat. The Andhra Chamber of Commerce will not be enfranchised.

In Bombay, the existing arrangements will continue, and the East India Cotton Association will get the seventh seat. The Bombay Chamber of Commerce and the Bombay Trades Association will between them have a three member constituency with one seat reserved for the Bombay Trades Association.

Bengal will have 14 European and 5 Indian seats, 2 have been assigned to the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and one each to the Indian Chamber of Commerce, the Marwari Association and the Muslim Chamber of Commerce.

The seat allotted to Indian Commerce in the United Provinces is to be shared by the U. P. Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' Chamber.

The electorate for the Punjab Commerce seat is to be composed of the Northern Indian Chamber of Commerce, the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, the Punjab Trades Association and the Indian Chamber of Commerce.

In Bihar, the three existing constituencies are to continue; the fourth seat will be filled by the Bihar Chamber of Commerce.

In the Central Provinces, Orissa and Sind, the Committee have recommended the formation of constituencies comprising companies, firms and individuals possessing certain qualifications.

Of the 11 seats allotted to Assam, 9 (7 Europeans and 2 Indians) have been assigned to planting (Tea) and 2 (1 European and 1 Indian) to Commerce and Industry. Here again, the Committee recommended special constituencies consisting of companies, firms and individuals.

## LABOUR CONSTITUENCIES

Chapter X:—The Committee have accepted the principle laid down by the Joint Select Committee that constituencies for the Labour seats shall partly be in organised Labour constituencies and partly in unorganised Labour constituencies. The Committee have achieved this in all cases except in Orissa and Sind. Thus Trade Unions have been given 2 seats in Madras, 6 in Bombay, 2 in Bengal, and 1 each in the

United Provinces, the Panjab, Bihar and the Central Provinces. The remaining 14 seats have been assigned to unorganised Labour, of which one seat in Bengal and all the 4 seats in Assam have been assigned to tea garden labour. In the case of tea garden labour, the Committee have accepted the principle of rotation for the sake of obtaining direct election.

The other recommendations are that the existing Trade Union Law be so amended as to invest Local Governments with the power of inspecting the registers of the Trade Unions and to make Government or professional audit of their accounts compulsory. Tribunals, as suggested by the Royal Commission on Labour and supported by the Indian Franchise Committee are to be constituted by the Governor acting in his discretion. This Tribunal is to make a yearly review of the Labour constituencies recommended.

The qualifications of a trade union for inclusion in the electorate for Trade Union constituencies are that : (1) it has been in existence for two years and registered for one year before the date fixed for the preparation of the electoral roll, (2) membership during the year preceding the preparation of the roll is not below 250, (3) it has complied with any rules under the Trade Union Act for inspection of books, (4) the preceding conditions have been attested to by a Tribunal.

The electoral registers for Trade Union constituencies are to be confined to the Province in which the Trade Union is registered. Where election is to be indirect the electoral roll is to be prepared by the employer.

The qualifications of the electors are : (1) That the elector has attained the age of 21, and is a British subject or subject of the prescribed Indian State.

(2) He has had a place of residence in the province for 6 months immediately preceding a date to be fixed by the Local Government (seamen to be exempted from this residential qualification).

(3) In the case of a Trade Union constituency, that on the date of the preparation of the electoral roll he has been a member of the Union, and in the case of an ordinary member has paid his subscription for the preceding twelve months. Member includes an honorary member or an official.

(4) In the case of a special Labour constituency, that he has been in continuous employment in a factory or a mine or a railway, a dockyard or harbour, or in any other industrial establishment registered under the Indian Factories Act or the Indian Mines Act for a period of not less than 180 days in the twelve months preceding the date of preparation of the electoral roll on a salary of not less than Rs. 10 and not more than Rs. 300 a month. This period, it may be necessary to vary in accordance with the conditions prevailing in different Provinces in which there are not Trade Union seats. A member of a registered Trade Union in the constituency is to be eligible for admission to the electoral roll of a special constituency.

(5) He is not employed in clerical, supervisory, recruiting or administrative capacities. Where a voter can vote in more than one Labour constituency enrolment is to be on application, save in certain Trade Union constituencies in Bombay and Bengal.

Election is to be direct in all Labour constituencies and to be uniform throughout India, the qualification of candidates being that they have attained the age of 25 years and possess the qualifications prescribed in the Fifth Schedule to the Government of India Act and is an elector in the constituency or in any other Labour constituency. In the provinces in which there are no Trade Union seats, honorary members or officials of registered Trade Unions, who satisfy the requirements regarding electors, are also to be eligible to stand as candidates for special Labour seats. The deposit at elections for Trade Union candidates is Rs. 250, for manual worker Rs. 50. Supervisory and clerical staff are to be excluded from the electoral rolls for special Labour constituencies.

#### ★ BACKWARD AREAS AND TRIBES

Chapter XIV :—Four out of the 5 seats allotted to backward areas and tribes in Orissa are to be filled by nomination. The seats assigned in Bombay and Bihar and the one seat in Orissa are to be filled by direct election from multi-member general constituencies, with one seat reserved for backward tribes. Madras, the Central Provinces and Assam are to have special constituencies for election. To these seats in Assam, there are to be 4 seats for backward tribes and 5 for backward areas.

Chapter XV :—For the Provincial Legislative Councils the proposals of Local Governments in regard to delimitation of constituencies are accepted. The method of



voting to multi-member constituencies is cumulative, qualifications of candidates being that of an elector in constituency.

#### FEDERAL COMMERCE

Chapter XVI :—Non-Provincial seat electorate: For the seat allotted to the Northern Indian Commercial bodies, the electorates are Northern India Chamber of Commerce, Punjab Chamber of Commerce and Upper India Chamber of Commerce. For provincial seats, the recommendations of Local Governments are accepted.

#### FEDERAL LABOUR

Chapter XVII : The seat assigned to Assam Labour in the Federal Assembly is to be filled by direct election from a tea Garden constituency, to be chosen in rotation by the Governor in his direction from one of the tea garden constituencies. For the Labour seats in the Assam Legislative Assembly, the non-provincial seat is to be assigned to the National Trades Union Federation or such other organisation of workers as may be selected by the Government of India for the nomination of the workers' delegate to the International Labour Conference under the provisions of Article 389 (5) of the Treaty of Versailles.

Chapter XVIII : The seats allotted to the Chief Commissioner's Provinces in the Federal Assembly seats are to be filled by direct election, one General and one Muhammadan seat in Delhi and one Federal seat in Ajmer-Merwara ; the seat assigned to British Baluchistan is to be filled by nomination by the Governor-General.

#### FEDERAL COUNCIL OF STATES

Chapter XIX :—For the Federal Council of State the recommendations of Local Governments as to constituencies are accepted. Single non-transferable vote will be followed in the case of the Muhammadan multi-member constituency in Madras. The seat assigned to British Baluchistan is to be filled by nomination by the Governor-General.

#### CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Chapter XX :—In regard to the conduct of elections the Committee have recommended :

- (1) Simplification of procedure for nomination and scrutiny by the returning officer.
- (2) The returning officer or the presiding officer to be given powers to correct obvious and minor mistakes in the electoral roll.

An Elections Department is to be established for revision of the electoral roll at any time ; election manual rules are to be made to avoid unnecessary challenging of voters.

#### CORRUPT PRACTICES

Chapter XXI :—As regards corrupt practices personation is to be a cognisable offence.

The rule regarding hiring is to be abrogated and the expenditure on this account is to be included in the return of election expenses.

There will be no change in the existing law relating to treating.

# The Niemeyer Report

## On the Financial Condition of Provinces

Sir Otto Niemeyer's report on the financial condition of the Provinces issued from Simla on the 30th. April 1936, states that the budgetary prospects of India, "given prudent management of her finances, justify the view that adequate arrangements can be made step by step to meet the financial implications of the new constitution."

Assistance costing the Centre about two crores of rupees annually is proposed for eight out of the eleven Provinces.

Sir Otto Niemeyer says: "His Majesty's Government may safely propose to Parliament that Part III of the Government of India Act 1935, should be brought into operation a year hence."

Income-tax amounting to six crores of rupees assignable to the Provinces will be retained by the Centre for the first five years, unless Railways resume substantial contributions. The Centre should begin relinquishing this revenue gradually during the second five years, so that within ten years of Provincial Autonomy, the Provinces may hope to enjoy their full share of this revenue head.

### ASSISTANCE TO PROVINCES

Sir Otto Niemeyer proposes to deal with the provinces in three stages. Immediate assistance from the beginning of provincial autonomy is recommended to certain provinces partly in the form of cash subventions, partly in the form of cancellation of the net (i. e. after offsetting certain balances) debt incurred prior to 1st April, 1936, and, partly in the form of the distribution of a further 12 and half per cent of the jute tax. In the cases of Bengal, Bihar, Assam, the N. W. F. P., and Orissa, the entire net debt is cancelled and in the case of the U. P. all pre-1936 deficit debt plus approximately two crores of pre-1921 debt.

Annual cash subventions will be as follows: U. P. 25 lakhs for 5 years only; Assam 30 lakhs; Orissa—40 lakhs; N. W. F. P. 100 lakhs subject to reconsideration after 5 years; Sind 105 lakhs to be reduced by stages after 10 years.

The total approximate annual relief in lakhs aimed at by Sir Otto Niemeyer is as follows: Bengal 75; Bihar 25; C. P. 15; Assam 45; N. W. F. P. 110 Orissa 50; Sind 105, U. P. 25. The extra recurrent cost to the centre is 192 lakhs.

Orissa is to get a further non-recurrent grant of 19 and Sind of 5

### PROVINCIAL SHARE OF INCOME-TAX

By six equal steps, beginning from the sixth year from the introduction of provincial autonomy, but subject to the proviso to Sec. 138 (2) of the Act, the Centre is to distribute income-tax to the provinces so that finally 50 per cent of the distributable total has been relinquished in the intermediate five years. There is no possible relinquishment of the income-tax so long as the portion of the distributable sum remaining with the Centre together with any contribution from railways aggregate to less than 10 crores.

The percentage division of the distributable portion of the income-tax between the provinces is as follows:

Madras, 15; Bombay, 20; Bengal, 20; U. P. 15; the Punjab, 8; Bihar, 10; C. P. 5; Assam, 2; N. W. F. P. 1; Orissa, 2; and Sind, 2.

Sir Otto Niemeyer states that substantial justice will be done by fixing the scale of distribution partly on residence and partly on population, paying to neither factor a rigidly pedantic deference for which the actual data provide insufficient justification

### PRINCIPLES OF SETTLEMENT

The following are salient extracts from the Report: Throughout the discussions leading up to the Government of India Act, it has been recognised that at the inauguration of provincial autonomy, each of the provinces should be so equipped as to enjoy a reasonable prospect of maintaining financial equilibrium and, in particular, that the chronic state of deficit into which some of them had fallen should be brought to an end. My first object has accordingly been to examine the present

and prospective financial position of the provinces and to determine the extent to which special assistance would be needed in order to achieve the above aim. Next, it is necessary to consider how far the Central Government is in a position to render such assistance without jeopardising its own solvency. Finally, I have to look further into the future and to suggest to what extent and when it may be possible for the Centre to place additional resources at the disposal of the provinces out of the proceeds of the taxes on income.

From the provincial point of view, the desirability of attaining this final result is undeniable and the only question (though in itself a difficult question) is to determine an equitable basis of distribution. From the central point of view, on the other hand, it is clear that the financial stability and credit India as a whole must remain the paramount consideration. Moreover, this is as essential to the provinces and to the success of provincial autonomy as it is to the Centre itself. Throughout my recommendations, I have kept the stability of the Central finances continuously in mind. Expenditure at the Centre cannot be expected, consistently with safety, to decrease much below the point to which it has now been reduced. There may be future savings on debt conversions, but so far as they remain with the general budget, they hardly seem likely to do more than assist in reinstating a more adequate contribution to debt redemption than the present reduced figure of 3 crores. It is, however, at least unnecessary to contemplate any serious increase in the total expenditure unless the railway budget, contrary to expectation, fails to improve.

Expenditure in the provinces could obviously be increased with advantage on many heads. This is a question of degree and opportunity. Some expansion in fact took place even with the existing provincial resources, especially in the years before the slump when many provinces were able, for instance, to increase substantially their expenditure on education. It may now be anticipated from the recovery of provincial revenues, not all of which are or need be static. Nevertheless, the allocation at an early date of a share in taxes on income under Section 23 of the Government of India Act constitutes, for many provinces, the main hope for the future expansion.

On a general review of the existing tendencies, I should conclude that the budgetary prospect of India, given prudent management of her finances, justify the view that adequate arrangements can be made step by step to meet the financial implications of the new constitution. A change of constitutional and administrative arrangements cannot of course in a movement alter the general financial position or enable all conceivable financial desires to be met, but I see no reason why a cautious but steady advance should not be achieved.

#### CLAIMS OF PROVINCES

I turn now more particularly to the prior question. The present position of the provinces and their contrasted positions *inter se*, both of which fall under the objective of starting the provinces on the occasion of autonomy on "an even keel". Various matters arise in this connection. How far in actual fact is each province now solvent and likely to remain solvent? This is a matter which cannot be judged on the position in the year only. How far, whatever may be its present position, has a province administered its affairs, whether in taxation or in expenditure, with adequate firmness and how far has this or that province, for whatever reason, been financially neglected in the past and thereby condemned to a lot from which others have escaped? It is obviously impossible to reconcile all the conflicting views and arguments on these issues. The recommendations I shall make represent, in my belief, an equitable settlement as between the various contestants and will, I hope, be accepted on that basis. I would only add here that in any country of the size of India there must inevitably be substantial differences in the standard of administrative needs and possibilities just as there are in other areas of the same size in the rest of the world or, for that matter, even in smallest units. The present position and the relative size of the provincial budgets are shown in appendix (II). As regards the figures for 1936-37, it must be borne in mind that they are estimates and experience suggests that the deficits thus prognosticated will, in the actual result, be smaller. Apart from that, there are a number of adjustments to be made in either direction before these figures can be regarded as any necessary indication of the future nor can any settlement undertake to secure that no province shall at any time and, whatever the course of its administration, be freed from the ordinary risk of a casual budgetary deficit. Provincial autonomy necessarily implies autonomous responsibility in this direction. Also, it is obvious as the Percy Committee

said, that special assistance to certain provinces which, whatever the precise form it takes, can only be given at the cost of the Central revenues and must operate to delay *pro tanto* the general transfer to all provinces of their share of the taxes or income. This consideration cannot be absent from the mind of anyone endeavouring to deal fairly with the whole problem and sets on limit to the amount of prior readjustment which can reasonably be admitted. At the same time, it is equally clear that some provinces are intrinsically better off than others and at the moment has urgently in need of additional resources and it is both desirable and inevitable that a certain measure of correction should be applied even if it means that provinces which have been able to attain higher standards of administration should now to some slight extent, have to progress more slowly.

Certain further general comments may be made. Bombay has just received an annual relief to the extent of approximately 90 lakhs from the separation of Sind; Madras and Bihar approximately 20 lakhs and 8 lakhs respectively from the separation of Orissa. Madras, Bombay and the Punjab have certainly not the lowest administrative standards in India. Bengal is clearly on a low standard, while Bihar and Orissa has been generally recognised as the poorest province in India. To a less extent, similar considerations apply to the Central Provinces. The position of the United Provinces is so far peculiar that while its ultimate future gives less reason for anxiety, its immediate difficulties are considerable.

#### SIND

Sind and Orissa as newly instituted provinces have special problems of their own. The future of Sind and of the subvention as part of Sind finances is inseparably bound up with the financial future of the Lloyd Barrage. In considering to what extent it is justifiable to continue this charge on the Centre, I must assume that the Barrage scheme will be administered on lines comparable with similar schemes elsewhere and that adequate rates will be charged for the facilities it will provide. In all the circumstances and bearing in mind the necessarily conjectural nature of estimates for a period stretching so far into the future, I recommend that the Sind subvention should remain at 105 lakhs for a period of 10 years (i. e., till 1946-47 inclusive) and should then be diminished by 25 lakhs a year for 20 years, by 40 lakhs a year for the next 5 years, by 45 lakhs a year for the next succeeding 5 years, and thereafter until the whole barrage debt is repaid, i. e., in about 40 years from 1942. Any remaining portion of the subvention will, of course, in any event cease.

#### ORISSA

It is impossible to ignore the fact that the existing standard of expenditure in Orissa is extremely low and the scope for expansion in the province's own resources in the early future is unusually limited as against the provision of 40 and a half lakhs in 1946-37 for recurrent Orissa expenditure. It is therefore necessary to contemplate a somewhat higher normal scale of assistance and my conclusion is that the figure should be increased to approximately 50 lakhs. I recommend also, in order to ease the position in the earlier years, that the Government of India should make a further grant to the Orissa Famine Fund so as to raise the total in the latter to the figure of 10 lakhs prescribed in the Orissa Order in Council. Five lakhs have already been provided for this purpose and a contribution of 1 and one-fourth lakhs included in the 1946-37 Orissa Budget so that a further non-recurrent sum of about 4 lakhs would be needed. Finally, it is clear that the cost of providing the new province with such essential buildings as are required will be rather more than the sum of 27 and a half lakhs for headquarters alone which the Government of India are setting aside out of their anticipated surplus of 1935-36. In my view, a further sum of 15 lakhs should suffice if a reasonable standard is set and I recommend that assistance for this purpose, additional to what has been proposed in the two preceding sub-paragraphs, should be provided at the rate of 3 lakhs per annum in each of the first five years. The total assistance which I propose should be given to Orissa is thus about 57 lakhs in the first year, 63 lakhs a year in the next four years, and, thereafter, 50 lakhs a year.

#### ASSAM

Assam has been universally recognised as a deficit province and must undoubtedly receive assistance. The measure of the assistance depends partly on the prospective

revenue of Assam allowing for a very moderate amount of continued recovery and partly on the degree to which the existing provincial deficit (47 lakhs in 1935-36) can be regarded as having been unavoidable (either as regards expenditure or taxation). Allowance has further to be made for the cost of provincial autonomy and for certain adjustments of expenditure with the Centre, including the cost of the Assam Rifles, hitherto mainly borne by the Central Government. At present the Central Government pays 12 lakhs per annum towards the total cost of the Assam Rifles (15 lakhs). In future the Central Government will in any case pay the cost of the Manipur Battalion (approximately 3 lakhs). The Central Government now proposes to bear 7 lakhs of the cost of the remaining Assam force and to treat this payment separately from any assistance for provincial needs proper. I think this an equitable arrangement. The Assam Government put forward a special claim in connection with the proceeds of the excise duties on Assam oil. Though the incidence of the tax obviously does not fall on the producing province, I do not think there is any economic justification for this particular claim or that it presents any real analogy with the superficially similar claim which it may be alleged, have been recognised elsewhere. In any case having regard to the amount of the proposed assistance which such a receipt could only operate to reduce, it is necessary to pursue this matter farther.

#### NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

The North-West Frontier Province which has since 1933 received an annual subvention of 1 crore from the Central Government, is so far in a special position that Section 142 of the Government of India Act permits an increase in its subvention at any time without an address from the federal legislature. It is however desirable, both from the point of view of the Province and from that of the Central Government, that the subvention should be fixed for a certain period of years. After examining the past and prospective budgetary position of the Province (and also, incidentally, the various references made in the past to equivalence in certain respects with the neighbouring districts of the Punjab), my recommendation is that the existing subsidy of 1 crore should be supplemented by approximately 10 lakhs per annum. In so far as this assistance may take the form of a subvention under Section 142, it should be fixed for a period of five years which should be subject to revision in the light of the then existing circumstances. By revision I am far from implying a further increase. I contemplate merely that the position should then be reviewed in the light of the five years' further financial administration.

#### CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S POSITION

Can the Centre support such an additional demand apart from this sum of nearly two crores per annum? Concurrently with the inauguration of provincial autonomy Burma will be separated from India at a net loss to the Central revenues now estimated by the Government of India at about two and three-fourth crores. These two items together clearly would present a budgetary problem of some magnitude if they had to be faced in 1937-38 at one blow and so soon from the normal resources of a single financial year. Thereafter, owing to the expansion in the central resources which may with confidence be anticipated, they need occasion no special difficulty. Thanks, however, to the Reserve Fund of about 2 crores which is being constituted out of the anticipated surplus of the year 1935-36, I see no reason why the grant of these additional resources to the Provinces should not commence in 1937-38.

In so concluding, I should be lacking in frankness if I did not make it clear that the scope in the next few years for the relaxation of revenue burdens is likely to be extremely small unless economic improvement takes place at a rate well in excess of what can now safely be assumed. I have, however, felt it right to assume that the establishment of provincial autonomy must be regarded as an objective to which the Government of India will give special consideration in assessing the relative order of its financial aims.

From the financial point of view, I conclude that His Majesty's Government may safely propose to Parliament that Part III of the Government of India Act 1919 should be brought into operation a year hence.

#### CLAIM OF JUTE PROVINCES

The claim of the jute-producing provinces to the whole or part of the jute export duty has already been recognised to the extent of 50 per cent by the Government of

India Act. In my opinion, it is doubtful whether the argument that the incidence of this particular duty falls wholly on the producer can be maintained. No concrete statistical proof of this contention has been produced and even if such proof could be proved for a specific date, it may be doubted whether it would be valid in all the circumstances of a changing market. Further, even if the argument were completely substantial, it would not be conclusive on the question whether or not the community as a whole in India was entitled to tap this source of revenue as it must in fact tap other sources of revenue of unequal provenance among the different parts of India. No source of revenue, whether customs, excise or income-tax, can in fact in any country be derived equally from all parts of the country alike, rich and poor, agricultural or industrial. In so far as a claim may be put forward on the ground that the taxable capacity of Bengal is limited by the incidence of this duty, that is a claim not so much to this particular duty as to financial assistance generally. It is part in fact of the case for a share in taxes on income or for such prior special treatment as it is the object of my present recommendations to secure. It may be thought that whatever validity there may be in the economic argument has already been met by the surrender to the provinces concerned of 50 per cent of the net produce of the duty. It will, however, be convenient that part of the assistance I contemplate should take the form of an increase in this figure and therefore I recommend that the percentage should be increased under Section 140 (2) of the Act to 62 and half on the estimated gross yield of the duty in 1930-32 at 350 lakhs. This increase of 12 and half per cent would mean in round figures the following additions to the resources of the provinces concerned at a corresponding cost to the Central Government: Bengal, 42 lakhs; Bihar 2 and half lakhs; Assam 2 and one-fourth lakhs; and Orissa rather over "one-fourth" lakh.

Apart from the separation of Burma and the provision of 2 crores assistance for the provinces which I have already recommended, the additional cost of the new federal institutions (probably something over half a crore) may be imminent and provision may have to be made for financial adjustments in respect of the States under Section 147 of the Act at a net ultimate annual cost now estimated at rather more than half a crore though the full annual charge on this latter account will presumably not fall to meet in the early years. If, however, there is bound to be delay, the provinces will no doubt recollect that they will be receiving from the Centre the amounts proposed in para 17 above, in addition to what certain of them have already been receiving from the jute export duty and about Rs. 1 and half crores per annum for roads as well as certain grants (Rs 3 and half crores) for rural purposes. Some of them have also received substantial assistance through being relieved of deficit areas.

#### BURDEN OF INCOME-TAX

I wish to add two comments on these recommendations. After the abolition of the tax on the smaller incomes and the two successive reductions in the rates imposed in 1931, the rate income-tax and super-tax in India, especially on the higher incomes are by no means excessive. The general scheme of Indian taxation (Central and Provincial) operates to relieve the wealthier commercial classes to an extent which is unusual in taxation schemes, and there would be no justifiable ground of complaint if a slight correction of this anomaly were maintained. The assignment of taxes on income is the main method of assisting provincial finances contemplated by the Government of India Act, and if the remaining surcharge were maintained, it would materially contribute to the early receipt by the provinces of additional resources.

#### POSITION OF RAILWAYS

The position of the Railways is frankly disquieting. It is not enough to contemplate that in five years' time, the Railways may merely cease to be in deficit. Such a result would also tend to prejudice or delay the relief which the provinces are entitled to expect. I believe that both the early establishment of effective co-ordination between the various modes of transport and the thorough-going overhaul of railway expenditure in itself are vital elements in the whole provincial problem.

#### BASIS OF DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME-TAX

Naturally each province advocates the basis of division (population, residence, etc.) which gives it the largest dividend. It cannot be said that any of the proposed bases have any particular scientific validity or satisfy in any appreciable degree the ideal,

but practically unascertainable test of capacity to pay. The mere accident of place of collection as has frequently been pointed out in previous discussions of this subject is clearly an unsuitable guide. The residence of the individual, though it may be a convenient and practically dividing line for purposes of avoiding double taxation between separate political units, is not in itself a very scientific criterion, particularly in a Federation and in fact, in India gives results (of necessity partly estimated), too suspiciously near those of collection to inspire much confidence.

Finally, even supposing it were practicable to ascertain to what part of India particular fractions of income (and, therefore, the incidence of the taxation burden) properly adhere, it is still arguable that in a Federation other considerations are involved, particularly if the benefits and incidence of other forms of common taxation are unequally divided as between the various partners.

## Text of the Official Correspondence

The following is the text of the correspondence between the local Governments, the Government of India and the Secretary of State on the recommendations of the Niemeyer Report issued from Simla on the 27th. May 1935 and copies of which had been presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State.

Briefly put, the Secretary of State has accepted the Niemeyer Report as a whole. The provincial Governments' protests are strongly worded, the only exception being the C. P. Government who have sent in the shortest telegram and accept the Niemeyer award without an elaborate criticism.

The longest representation is by the Punjab Government and the Secretary of State's reply deals with this province at greater length than with any other province. The Madras Government after drawing a comparative picture between Bengal and Madras urges that the population factor should be given a greater weight.

The Bombay Government regrets *inter alia* that the distribution of income-tax relief should be made entirely dependent upon the successful running of railways and presses for cancellation of fictitious debt created in respect of unproductive irrigation works.

The Bengal Government is moderate in its representation and while accepting the award wants the jute duty to be recognized in future as a provincial source.

The U. P. Government admits that the Niemeyer Report is a carefully balanced scheme and suggests that after five years until receipts from income-tax amount to Rs. 15,00,000 a subvention be given sufficient to bring the income-tax receipts plus subvention to Rs. 15,00,000.

The Punjab Government feels that the province will have a permanent sense of injustice and wishes that at least their income-tax share should be fixed on the population percentage.

Bihar puts in its claim as the poorest province and wishes that the basis of distribution should be wholly population.

The Assam Government is divided. The Indian Members and Ministers are profoundly disappointed while their European colleagues do not admit that a deficit of Rs. 25,00,000 is involved.

The N. W. F. P. objects to the Niemeyer Report unnecessarily prejudging its position regarding subvention five years hence.

The Orissa Government protests that the proposals involve a great disparity in the treatment among assisted units giving to Orissa subvention far less per head of population than to other units who have already a far higher standard of expenditure per head.

The Sind Government presumes that the door would be left open for adjustment of subvention and debt repayment in case revenue expectations are not realised.

The Provincial Governments' views were sent by the first week of May except the Punjab, whose views were submitted on April 13. The Government of India telegraphed to the Secretary of State their views on May 14 and enunciated the

position in clear terms. They pointed out the figures of the initial cost of assistance to the Provincial Governments were in excess of anything the Government of India had hitherto contemplated and thought that the divisible income-tax receipts to be permanently retained by the centre would be fixed at two-thirds instead of a half. However, recognizing that the Niemeyer Report is in the nature of a quasi-arbitrary award, they hope that the Niemeyer programme is feasible. They declare, however, that unless railway solvency on the basis of a full commercial accounting system can be restored (and that before long) the latter stage of the programme envisaged by Sir Otto Niemeyer, relating to income-tax would be quite impossible of execution. The Government of India also consider that any material increase in customs tariff will endanger the practicability of the plan. They conceive, in fact, that in order to conserve the revenue yield it will be necessary from time to time to propose reductions of particular duties.

As regards surcharges, 'whether these are retained permanently or only temporarily, it seems to us indubitable that in recommending a settlement so generous to the provinces Sir Otto has rendered it difficult in the next ten years for the Government of India either to increase its exiguous provision for the sinking fund to a reasonable figure or to reduce the indirect taxes which are an undue burden either upon the consumer, except in cases where such action will be clearly advantageous to revenue.'

As regards the Niemeyer proposals for decentralization of the balances and consolidation of the pre-autonomy debt, the Government of India regard them as an integral part of the initial financial settlement. The Secretary of State has agreed with this view, as also with the view of the Government of India that when the railways show a surplus these should not be used for replacing the sums borrowed from the depreciation fund. He also approves of the proposals regarding improvement of the railway accounting procedure.

The Government of India make it clear that they see no chance of relinquishing any further part of the jute duty by 1942 or indeed by any specific date. On this the Secretary of State declares that, if on account of the reduction in the jute export duty the value to the growing provinces of their percentage were materially reduced it would be necessary to consider whether those provinces required additional assistance.

As regards the question of the remaining surcharges on income-tax, the Secretary of State says:—'If the scheme of finance upon which the successful operation of provincial autonomy depends is found to necessitate the continuance for some time longer of this burden (either in the present or in any equivalent form) I shall accord my full support to the Government of India.'

The Secretary of State deals briefly with the cases put by the various provinces. Referring to the Punjab, he says:—'I have no doubt that a province so well endowed with natural resources and with so high a tradition of efficient administration as the Punjab will, in fact, without assistance be much more favourably situated than many of the other provinces even after allowing for the help which the latter will receive.' The point raised by the Punjab Government regarding the supply of excise liquor by one province to another would require further examination. The Secretary of State assures the N. W. F. Province that the intention is to reconsider the question of subvention at the end of five years.

Both the Government of India and the Secretary of State express great appreciation of the service rendered by Sir Otto Niemeyer and regard his report as a quasi-arbitrary award.

### Secretary of State's Telegram

The Secretary of State sent to the Government of India the following telegram on May 20, giving reasons why he has accepted the Niemeyer Report as a whole and indicating his views on certain points raised by the Government regarding the future policy:—

'I have now received the views of each of the provincial Governments and of your Excellency's Government upon Sir Otto Niemeyer's Report, and having carefully examined these communications, I have reached conclusions which are set forth below. In order that a full information of the considerations that I have had to weigh may be available, I propose to present to Parliament both the views of the Government of India and this reply.

'I cordially join in acknowledgments which are due to Sir Otto Niemeyer for undertaking the responsible and difficult task that was allotted to him and for the man-



ner in which he has discharged it. No problem connected with the process of constitutional reform in India has given rise to greater conflict of views and interests than the matter of finance and it is, indeed, fortunate that one who combined such exceptional experience and authority with complete detachment from Indian controversies was able to assist in the final stages of its solution. There can be no more striking evidence of formidable complexities of issues upon which he has delivered so clear a judgment than the documents now under review.

Sir Otto's task had two aspects. On the one hand he was appointed to conduct an independent investigation of the present and prospective budgetary positions of the Government of India and of the Governments of provinces before the final decisions were taken by his Majesty's Government and Parliament as to the date for the introduction of new provincial constitutions. On the other hand he was required to make recommendations for completion by Order-in-Council of a scheme of financial relations between the centre and the provinces embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935, and for other adjustments ancillary to that scheme. The matters remaining to be determined by Order-in-Council were allocation between the centre and the provinces of the proceeds of income-tax and jute export duty and prescription of grants-in-aid of revenues of such provinces as were found to require assistance in this form. The two aspects of enquiry are connected by an objective inherent in the constitutional plan of equipping provinces with at least sufficient minimum of resources at the outset, and of providing them with further resources in future, for questions at once arise both of ability of the Central Government to surrender a part of its present resources and of the manner in which the sums available should be distributed among the provinces.

Sir Otto's conclusions upon the general question of adequacy of financial resources is that the budgetary prospects of India given a prudent management of her finances, justify the view that adequate arrangements can be made, step by step, to meet the financial implications of the new constitution' (paragraph no. 8), and after making recommendations to meet the immediate needs of the provinces, he adds specifically, from financial point of view I conclude, that his Majesty's Government may safely propose to Parliament that part II of the Government of India Act, 1935, should be brought into operation a year hence' (paragraph no. 13). These conclusions have been reached after an expert and exhaustive examination of the position in consultation with the financial authorities of each of the provinces and of the Government of India and must accordingly command the respect.

#### COMMENTS OF PROVINCIAL GOVTS.

It was perhaps inevitable that so long as the final decision had not been pronounced upon the extent of benefit that each province might expect to receive, comments of the provincial Governments should generally speaking have been designed mainly to emphasise their individual difficulties and natural desires for greater resources. In any case, it was scarcely to be expected that where aspirations have considerably out-run the financial possibilities and expectations have been high, and where the effects of a setback that accompanied depression are still keenly felt, necessarily limited proposals now under consideration would receive from this quarter an unqualified welcome. I fully realize, indeed, that the financial administration of all provinces will continue to demand great caution and that the budgetary problems of some provinces will present difficulties.

I see no reason, however, to believe that those problems need prove insoluble and I find confirmation for the view not only in Sir Otto Niemeyer's judgment, but also in fact that no provincial Government makes any suggestion that the introduction of provincial autonomy should be delayed on financial grounds.

On the other hand the problem of the Government of India in finding some five crores, partly to assist the provinces and partly in consequence of the separation of Burma, demands consideration. Sir Otto Niemeyer was far from ignoring the implications of this problem which are further emphasised by the Government of India. It is clear that the central Government, no less than provincial Governments, will have to direct its financial policy with special care, but I do not understand that the Government of India anticipate insuperable difficulties and I share this view.

#### DEFICIT IN PROVINCES

In considering this question, it is well, I think, to appreciate the extent to which such practical difficulties as remain to be overcome are inherent in the existing situation independent of prospect of constitutional reform. The anxiety of provinces

for a more liberal allotment of resources has been continuously manifested over a long period. Moreover, the problem of chronic deficit in the provinces could not have much longer been left unsolved. These are the major factors in the situation and would have to be faced even if no change in the existing form of Government was contemplated. Besides them, the cost of such changes as the enlarged electorate and the legislatures which are connected with the new constitution is relatively insignificant.

It is, of course, clear that the solution of all these problems might have been simpler, had they been under consideration in more propitious economic circumstances. Unless, however, completely unforeseeable setback occur, the position will evidently be markedly better than could have been anticipated at a time when the framework of the new constitution was under discussion. It will be recalled that the joint committee gave special attention to the financial background of reforms and concluded that Parliament would at an appropriate time require assurance from his Majesty's Government that the new constitution could be inaugurated without thereby aggravating the financial difficulties to a dangerous extent. In my view the assurance that may now be given can be framed in appreciably more positive and hopeful terms. After full consideration I entirely accept Sir Otto Niemeyer's conclusions and I had no hesitation in proposing with the concurrence of your Excellency's Government that April 1st, 1937 should be appointed as the date for the commencement of provincial autonomy. A draft order in Council for this purpose (upon the technical of detail which the Government of India and the provincial Governments have been separately consulted) will shortly be submitted to Parliament.

In regard to the second aspect of Sir Otto Niemeyer's enquiry, it is evident that the past history of the discussion of financial relations between the centre and the provinces afforded no good reason to hope that his recommendations would be immediately acceptable to all parties concerned. As the Joint Committee pointed out the problem of allocation of resources in the federal system has everywhere proved singularly impracticable, for the conflict of interest that arises is practically incapable of complete resolution (?). The assessment of the relative financial need of the centre and of the provinces collectively is a sufficiently difficult task but the other facet of the problem adjudication of rival claims of provinces gives rise to issues of even greater delicacy. I share the Government of India's view that in both respects Sir Otto's report must be regarded as in the nature of a quasi-arbitrary award and it is accordingly clear that such a nicely balanced scheme could not properly be disturbed except for strongest reasons. I have examined the recommendations closely on this basis. So far as concern the aggregate assistance to be afforded to provinces, I am not prepared to dissent from the Government of India's view that it is out of question at the present moment for the Central Government to undertake greater commitments. Immediate or prospective, than Sir Otto has recommended. In these circumstances it is, of course, clear that any material alteration in the treatment accorded to particular provinces can be made only at the expense of other province. How extensive is the field of controversy to which this would lead is readily apparent from the conflicting views of the provincial Governments that are before me. Each province is inevitably convinced of the strength of its own claims and is bound to experience difficulty in appreciating the significance of its case relatively to circumstances of other provinces. It cannot be overlooked that Sir Otto Niemeyer has brought independent judgment to bear on this subject and that he has had exceptional opportunity of appreciating the problem as a whole. It is my considered view that he has achieved as equitable a settlement between the various contestants as the case allows. I propose accordingly to accept his recommendations as a whole. Before accepting the recommendations as not only equitable but practicable I have paid attention to the special problems that are mentioned by the Government of India.

#### FINANCIAL POSITION OF RAILWAYS

As regards the financial position of railways, I note with satisfaction that the Government of India have the matter actively under consideration and your Excellency's Government may count on my support in any measure that may be necessary for the improvement of the position.

#### CUSTOMS REVENUE

I note the Government of India's view regarding the customs revenue which is a matter that will undoubtedly call for most careful consideration in the near future.

## SURCHARGE ON INCOME-TAX

The question of retaining surcharge on income-tax is, as the Government of India point out, one of some difficulty and although it is only one aspect of the general budgetary problem which will arise from time to time, I feel bound to say at once with reference to their observations on the subject that if the scheme of finance upon which the successful operation of provincial autonomy depends is found to necessitate the continuance for some time longer of this burden (either in its present or in any equivalent form) I shall accord my full support to the Government of India.

I agree that in any case there is bound to be some uncertainty whether the programme for transfer of income-tax to provinces can be fully realized and in this connection I think it well to associate myself with the warning given by Sir Otto Niemeyer in paragraph 32 of his report.

While every effort will be made, so far as I am concerned, and also I have no doubt by the Government of India, to fulfil the hopes now extended to provinces, the scheme cannot be assumed by them to represent the final commitment. At the same time with reference to the Government of India's observations as regards the provincial percentage, I am bound to emphasize the importance that I attach to securing the maximum possible ultimate distribution to provinces for which reason I welcome both Sir Otto's proposal and the Government of India's view, which I share, that there is a fair reason to believe in its feasibility. It is relevant to remember that the mistake in fixing the percentage unduly low cannot be rectified since the percentage originally prescribed is incapable of increase by a subsequent Order-in-Council. Against any mistake in the contrary direction, however, there are safeguards both of the Governor-General's delaying power, to which attention has been drawn by Sir Otto and the Government of India, and in the last resort a possible reduction in percentage by an amending order.

In view of my general conclusions already indicated, it would serve no good purpose to attempt a detailed commentary on the views submitted by each individual province. There are, however, certain specific points upon which a brief comment is unavoidable, and in the first place I wish to express concurrence in the Government of India's observations in connection with representations of Assam, Sind, Bihar and Bengal. As regards Bengal, I would add that it cannot in my opinion properly be assumed that the power in respect of jute export duty placed by the Government of India Act in the Central Legislature will not be exercised with due regard to the economic interests of that province. On such assumption applied throughout the field of central legislation, which of necessity includes subjects that affect certain units more than others, the federal idea would be practically unworkable. In so far, however, as there may be a case for reducing sooner or later the rate of jute export duty, I think it necessary to say now that if on account of such reduction the value to the growing provinces of their percentages were materially reduced it would be necessary to consider whether in the circumstances those provinces required an additional assistance either in the form of a change in jute duty percentage or otherwise.

## PROBLEMS BEFORE U. P. GOVERNMENT

I appreciate the practical problems that confront the Government of the United Provinces. I have, however, not understood that Sir Otto Niemeyer's recommendation was related to the precise requirements of each particular year and am unable to accept the suggestion that in aggregate it need prove inadequate, having regard to the circumstances of the United Provinces and to the special problems that the central budget will present in the first year or two. It appears to me not unreasonable that the beneficiary should accept the assistance in even amounts and make budgetary dispositions accordingly.

## PUNJAB GOVERNMENT

While I sympathize with much that the Punjab Government says, I cannot refrain from observing that the case of that province relatively to others, particularly Madras and Bombay, appears to have been somewhat exaggerated. Sir Otto Niemeyer has clearly had to consider cases of those provinces after allowing for separation of Orissa and Sind and I am not prepared to dispute the equity of his conclusions. Moreover from the practical point of view the benefits of creation of Sind and Orissa have been largely absorbed into the budgets of the parent provinces this year and though they will, of course, permanently strengthen the position of those provinces

they will not represent the additional free resources at the disposal of the new Ministries. Again, such benefits as Madras and Bombay may derive from the decentralisation and consolidation scheme is, as the Government of India point out, temporary, while on the other hand it may be noted that as part of the debt scheme the Punjab is left with a large block of debt on exceptionally favourable terms.

I sympathize with the natural disappointment of the Punjab Government that that province alone of the provinces of India should receive no assistance, except to a trifling degree through debt scheme. But I am not satisfied that there are sufficient grounds for giving any special relief to that province which Sir Otto Niemeyer has not recommended. The central resources, especially at the outset, are not such that assistance can be given except when the need is imperative. I have no doubt that the province so well endowed with natural resources, and with so high tradition of efficient administration as the Punjab will in fact without assistance be much more favourably situated than many of other provinces, even after allowing for help which the latter will receive. The fact that one or two other provinces, whose economic strength is perhaps comparable with that of the Punjab, happen to receive relief owing to their territorial reorganizations and debt scheme, cannot afford justification for grant of some equivalent benefit to the Punjab. It has also to be remembered that additional resources will become available to the new Punjab Government when income-tax begins to be distributed. I note that the Punjab Government consider that they will be at some financial disadvantage on the introduction of provincial autonomy owing to the expected loss in connection with the supply of liquor by the province to other administrations. Arrangements covering the supply of excise liquor by one province to another will have to be reviewed in the light of the new constitutional position and I consider that the points raised by the Punjab Government in this connection will require further examination.

#### DRAFT ORDER

I am submitting to Parliament the draft distribution of Revenues Order which deals with income-tax, jute export duty and grants-in-aid to certain provinces in strict accordance with Sir Otto Niemeyer's recommendations.

#### FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS

Technical points in the Draft Order have been separately discussed with the Government of India but there are certain fundamental assumptions that I must set forth on the present occasion.

(a) The calculation to which Section 138 (1) of the Government of India Act gives rise involves certain assumption as to the interpretation of that section and Sir Otto Niemeyer has recorded assumptions that he has made in the annexed letter. The order has been drafted upon the basis of these assumptions and as the allocation of appreciable sums is involved it is necessary that I should make this clear.

(b) It has always been assumed that 'corporation tax' (which is allocated by the Act as a federal source of revenue) would mean a tax of the nature of the existing supertax on companies and definition in section 311 (2) of the Act was intended to have this result. I understand, however, that doubt has arisen whether the definition is entirely satisfactory. If such doubt is substantiated hereafter it may be necessary to ask Parliament to rectify the position.

(c) Sir Otto has recommended that for the purpose of the formula which governs the allocation of income-tax in the first five years' period the computation of railway contributions to the general revenues should be made on the basis provided by the present railway convention which was formulated in the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on September 24, 1924. In accepting this recommendation I agree with the Government of India that the method of application of that resolution to the present purpose should in respect of treatment of loans from depreciation fund, the treatment of arrears of contribution to general revenues (which are not specifically mentioned but are in *pari materia*) and the improvement of the accounting procedure be on the lines suggested in paragraph 5 of their views. The relevant provision of the Draft Order in Council are intended to give effect to the above.

(d) The provisions of the Draft Order in respect of North-West Frontier Province grant-in-aid do not bear on the face of them qualifications that the case of this province is to be reconsidered in five years' time, which was what Sir Otto recommended. It would, in fact, be inconvenient to make such a provision in

the Order, but I wish to make it clear that the intention is to reconsider the matter at the end of five years. In this connection I have noted the concluding comments in the views of this province and I think it desirable to state that so far as I am concerned there is no question of prejudging at the present time any decision that may have to be taken in the light of the circumstances of five years hence.

(c) The provisions of Sind assume that the Barrage Debt Funding Scheme will be on the lines recommended by Sir Otto Niemeyer and measures to this end are in contemplation.

The scope of the Draft Order in Council does not extend to decentralisation of balances and cancellation and consolidation of debt referred to in paras 19 to 21 and appendix III of the report. These are matters which will fall to be dealt with immediately before the commencement of provincial autonomy under the existing statutory powers (subject to certain amendments of the devolution rules). It is clear in any event that the grant of specified assistance to certain provinces by the cancellation of debt is an essential part of Sir Otto Niemeyer's scheme and I shall assure Parliament that necessary action in this regard will be taken. In addition, however, I entirely agree with the Government of India that the scheme for decentralisation of balances and consolidation of debt must be regarded as an integral part of the whole plan and on this basis I have decided to accept the scheme. Detailed arrangements for its execution will be discussed.

### Government of India's Telegram

The Government of India sent to the Secretary of State the following telegram on May 14 summing up their views on the Niemeyer Report :—

We wish at the outset to express our great appreciation of the service which Sir Otto Niemeyer has rendered to India in making a survey of Indian finances contained in his report and in undertaking the task of trying to satisfy all provinces as well as the centre from resources which are not indefinitely expanding.

Sir Otto estimates the cost of his recommendations at about Rs. 2 crores a year, diminishing by a few lakhs as the special non-recurring grants to Orissa and Sind run off. To this figure must be added the cost of decentralising the balances and the cost of the debt consolidation scheme referred to in Appendix III. Altogether the Government of India calculate that the initial cost of these adjustments is about Rs. 2 1/2 crores a year, of which Rs. 2 crores will fall directly on the budget and Rs. 1/2 crore will be the diminution of capital repayments. The consolidation proposals also involve the spreading of repayment instalments, which will have the effect of increasing somewhat the interest charges in the central budget in the early years, though the increase will be counter-balanced by corresponding decreases later on.

The figures of initial cost are in excess of anything the Government of India have hitherto contemplated, but nevertheless having regard to the supreme importance which is attached to giving provincial autonomy a fair start, they are prepared to accept the conclusion reached by Sir Otto in paragraph 18 of his report (*viz.*, that his Majesty's Government may safely propose to Parliament that part III of the Government of India Act, 1935, should be brought into operation as from the 1st April next) provided that there is no question of increasing in any appreciable degree the total of initial assistance recommended, and provided that it is clearly understood that it may be necessary to retain the remainder of the surcharges on income-tax and super-tax, at any rate for some time after the 1st April, 1937, in order to maintain a balanced central budget. Incidentally, we desire to indicate that we attach very great importance to the general adoption of the arrangements which we have proposed for decentralisation of the balances and the consolidation of the pre-autonomy debt and to express earnest hope that these arrangements will have our full support. Indeed, we go so far as to say that we regard them as an integral part of the initial financial adjustments. In this connection we wish to correct a misapprehension which appears to exist that some provinces will get large unco-ordinated benefits from these arrangements. The greater part of the gains shown in Appendix III represents merely the immediate budgetary effect of spreading debt repayments over a longer period. In later years, of course, the result of this spreading will be to prevent budgetary reductions which would otherwise have taken place.

The next question which arises out of the report is whether the central budget can continue to sustain the burden involved by these initial adjustments plus the cost of the separation of Burma (estimated at Rs. 2 and 3-4 crores per annum) and in addition, can forego in stages over the following 10 years a further sum of at least Rs. 6 crores. Naturally we have had to frame for the information of Sir Otto Niemeyer such forecasts as we could reasonably make of our position in the years to come. Inevitably these estimates are invested with great uncertainty. The factors which make for uncertainty are, with two exceptions, set out by Sir Otto. Those exceptions are the possibility of India's being involved in war and the possibility of internal political disturbances of such a magnitude as materially to affect the prosperity of the country. The former possibility no calculation can take into account, the latter the Government of India think that they may safely reject. For rest, there fall to be considered the position of the railways and the possibility of the law of diminishing returns setting in in connection with the customs revenue.

As regards railways, the Government of India have no hesitation in saying that unless their solvency on the basis of a full commercial accounting system can be restored, and that before very long, the latter stages of the programme envisaged by Sir Otto Niemeyer will be quite impossible of execution. At present it is hoped that the deficits can be met without depleting the existing reserve of Rs. 9 or 10 crores, but in the not distant future the annual demand for renewals and replacements is bound to increase considerably, and unless in the meantime a position of complete solvency has been reached the reserve will rapidly become exhausted with the consequence of a call upon the central budget. The Government of India have under consideration the practical steps to be taken in this connection, and they hope to approach the Secretary of State shortly in the matter.

As regards customs, the general level of tariff is now so high that the maintenance of an aggregate yield which is by far the most important single factor in the whole revenue position has become a somewhat precarious task. There is plainly no further reserve which could now be drawn upon to meet an emergency, as was done twice in 1931, and any serious relapse in the value of India's import trade would inflict a damage which would be beyond the remedy of a mere increase of tariff. Even if we exclude, further, a deterioration in the conditions of international trade the present pitch even of revenue duties is itself liable to provoke regressive tendencies. The Government of India, therefore, consider that any material increase in tariff will endanger the practicability of the plan. They conceive, in fact, that in order to conserve the revenue yield it will be necessary from time to time to propose reductions of particular duties.

The question now is regarded by the Government of India as feasible and acceptable. On this the Government of India are bound to observe that they had hoped that in view of the initial assistance to the provinces recommended by Sir Otto being far greater than was originally contemplated, the proportion of divisible income-tax receipts to be permanently retained by the centre would be fixed at two-thirds and not a half. However, recognising that the report is in the nature of a quasi-arbitrary award the Government of India content themselves with saying that they hope and have fair reason to believe that Sir Otto's programme is feasible. In making this statement they rely, of course, on the powers of the Governor General under the proviso to sec. 138 (2) of the Act, to which Sir Otto pointedly draws attention in the concluding words of paragraph 32 of his report, but they would obviously have felt considerably more confident that the delaying powers would not need to be invoked if the percentage allocated to the provinces had been fixed at 33 and one-third.

In this connection the Government of India cannot refrain from referring to some of the implications of the report. Those which relate to the solvency of the railways and the general level of the customs tariff have already been dealt with. That relating to the remaining surcharges on income-tax and super-tax raises very difficult questions which cannot be fully discussed here, but we do say that, so far as we can estimate the adoption of the suggestion contained in paragraph 31 (1) of the report would not enable the centre appreciably to increase the scale of initial subventions, though it would obviously advance the date when the distribution of income-tax to the provinces commences and it would render more certain of the full programme within ten years. In any case, whether the surcharges are retained permanently or only temporarily it seems to us indubitable that in recommending a settlement so generous to the provinces Sir Otto has rendered it difficult in the next ten years for the Government of India either to increase its exiguous provision for the sinking fund to a reasonable figure or to reduce those indirect taxes which are

an undue burden either upon enterprise or upon the consumer except in cases where such action would be clearly advantageous to revenue. Indeed, unless prosperity returns at a quicker pace than now it seems likely that both the present Government of India and its federal successor will find their freedom of action in the financial sphere uncomfortably limited.

Finally, the Government of India would wish to mention one point of detail in regard to the first period of 5 years after provincial autonomy. Sir Otto recommends that the provinces should during this period get any sums by which the divisible pool of income-tax exceeds Rs. 13 crores less any contribution to general revenues from the railways. He explains that this railway contribution is to be assessed in accordance with the present separation convention, but this is not in itself a precise basis of assessment and indeed it would be quite possible within the present convention to render Sir Otto's recommendation nugatory. For example, if surpluses are applied first to replacing the sums borrowed from the depreciation fund no contribution can possibly arise. The Government of India assume that the Secretary of State will provide in the Order in Council against a possibility such as this. On the other hand, they wish to point out that they have for some time been considering whether, and have now actually decided, to remedy the present accounting rules under which an excessive amount of expenditure upon renewals and replacements is charged to capital. The plan decided upon involves reducing the charges to capital and increasing the net charge both against revenue and against the depreciation fund. In a normal year it will mean an additional charge of something like Rs. 20 lakhs against railway revenue and they assume that there is no question of regarding it as inconsistent with the report, which clearly could not intend that the centre should make payments on revenue account to the provinces at the expense of an illicit expansion of the railway capital account.

So far we have thought fit to set out our own views without specific reference to the views expressed by the provincial Governments. For the most part these take the form of asking for more for themselves and of complaining that other provinces have been treated too well. The cost to the central budget of the various additional demands now put toward is nearly a crore a year as from the 1st April next, while there is the further proposal that the centre should forego an additional crore or more a year by way of reduction of the jute duty not later than the 1st April 1942. We wish to make it clear beyond a peradventure that we see no prospect whatever of being able to undertake additional burdens of this magnitude or indeed, as we have previously tried to show, of any appreciable size at all. This means that, if concessions are to be made to individual provinces, it can only be done at the expense of other provinces and not of the centre and for our part we see great difficulties in any redistribution of relief, which may easily create more discontent than it alleviates.

Apart from these general observations there are a few specific points which require mention.

**Assam**—We are clear that Sir Otto deliberately limited the cancellation of debt to that incurred prior to the 1st April, 1936. There are obvious reasons for such a course, but, apart from that, the residual relief which he recommends is definitely assessed on that basis.

**Sind**—The Government of India would point out that the subventions proposed are equivalent to a capital gift of something like Rs. 20 crores, so that in effect a very large part of the Barrage debt is being cancelled, but in our view it is important that Sind should retain an incentive to make the Barrage remunerative as a business proposition. On the basis of the present estimates the Barrage will ultimately yield a considerable net annual surplus after allowing for the complete cessation of the subvention.

**Bihar**—This arithmetical argument is clearly invalid. There can be no doubt that if the debt had first been made less onerous by being spread over a longer period, Sir Otto Niemeyer would have assessed the relief immediately required, not at Rs. 25 lakhs, but at some smaller figure.

**Bengal**—(a) The proposal that the datum-line of divisible income-tax receipts for the first 5 year period should be fixed at Rs. 12 and not 13 crores is unacceptable. The latter figure was doubtless fixed, after a review of the forecast of the central budgetary position year by year, at a minimum which would reasonably promise an equilibrium. At all events, that is definitely our view of the situation.

(b) As regards the distribution of income-tax between Bengal and Bombay, we clearly can have nothing to say except perhaps to point-out that Sir Otto Niemeyer explains that his proposals are not based upon any uniform combination of population and residence.

(c) We have already made it clear that we see no chance of being able to relinquish any further part of the jute duty by 1942 or, indeed, by any specific date. In the circumstances we deem it unnecessary to argue on the merits of this proposition.

## U. P. GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The U. P. Government recognize that the Niemeyer Report presents a carefully balanced scheme which, in its main outline, stands or falls as a whole. Though there are certain important factors to which they would have wished a different value to be given they realize that it is not practical at this stage to suggest fundamental changes in the scheme and put forward for solution an extremely difficult and complicated problem. There is, however, one important point relating to the United Provinces which appears to the U. P. Government not to have been fully appreciated and which is likely to have such serious effect on the new constitution in the province that they feel bound to press it strongly on the attention of the Government of India and the Secretary of State. The U. P. Government accept the general conclusions of the Niemeyer Report that apart from the ultimate share in income-tax receipts a temporary relief only is necessary in this province. The reason for the peculiar position of the United Provinces noted by Sir Otto Niemeyer is that its revenues are at present depleted by no less than Rs. 112 lakhs annually by slump in agricultural prices. The land revenue remission carries with it the remission of annual rents to tenants, amounting to four crores and thus affecting vitally the whole of the agrarian position. The loss in land revenue can only be gradually reduced. A temporary relief is thus essential in the earlier stages of the process of recovery. The position for the first few years of provincial autonomy is, however, appreciably worse than it appears to have been realized. The policy for adjusting the land revenue demand which the Government with the unanimous approval of the legislatures have just embarked upon involves a somewhat slow and costly procedure for settlement and revision of land revenue on the basis of the existing prices and the expenditure thereon in the first two years will exceed, resulting in an increase in land revenue receipts by substantial sums. Drastic retrenchment in provincial expenditure have been effected since the slump and during the past year the Government have again scrutinized every item of expenditure with utmost care and have made and taken into account in the estimates further reductions, which in their judgment carry retrenchment to the extreme limit. They have, indeed, reduced the standard of administration in some cases to an unreasonably low level which cannot be maintained much longer.

In addition, the legislature in the last session passed two taxation measures, increasing the court fees and stamp duty but the effect of this will be largely discounted during the next few years by the depressing effect of the debt legislation on the receipts under this head, the depression being at present greater and is likely to be more sustained than formerly anticipated. A careful re-examination of the position reveals that there will be inevitably a revenue deficit of Rs. 53 lakhs in the first year of provincial autonomy which the proposed subvention of Rs. 25 lakhs would reduce to 28 lakhs. In the second year it is estimated that with a subvention of Rs. 25 lakhs there must still be a deficit of seven lakhs. This means that as a result of two years' working of the new constitution the Government, even if it provided no fresh expenditure for developments which were urgently required, would have incurred a deficit of Rs. 35 lakhs.

The Government feels confident that neither the Government of India nor the Secretary of State would consider it reasonable that the new Government should be faced at the outset with inevitable deficit on this scale. The effect of the working of the new constitution and on the public attitude to finance will be most harmful. As far as the Government of the United Provinces can judge it is not the intention of Sir Otto Niemeyer that any other province should be launched into the new constitution with an actual inevitable deficit.

The Government, therefore, strongly urges that sufficient assistance should be given at the outset to enable the province to start not in a submerged condition. They suggest that the subvention be raised by Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 40 lakhs for each of the first three years and be fixed at Rs. 25 lakhs as proposed in the report, for



the remaining two years. This would still leave the new Government with a deficit of Rs. 13 lakhs in the first year, but the recovery would at least be in sight.

In connection with the distribution of income-tax receipts this Government wish to emphasise the very great importance they attach to Sir Otto Niemeyer's proposal for an early and thorough-going overhaul of the railway expenditure.

Lastly, if it is necessary for the Governor-General at the end of five years to exercise his delaying power under sec. 138 of the Government of India Act so that a province does not at that time receive any appreciable amount of the income-tax the loss by the cession of subvention, would result in a serious budgetary difficulty.

The Government, therefore, suggest that after the first period of five years until the receipts from income-tax amount to Rs. 15 lakhs a subvention should be given, sufficient to bring the total income-tax receipts plus the subvention to Rs. 15 lakhs.

## BOMBAY GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The Bombay Government's telegram to the Government of India and the Secretary of State records an emphatic protest in regard to the recommendations of the Niemeyer Report, as no steps are proposed to correct the position in which Bombay province is involved by the inequity of the Meston Settlement at the cost of the city development schemes undertaken at the behest of the Secretary of State and the drain on the presidency owing to its association with Sind. The telegram referring to retrenchment and taxation measures says that public opinion is unanimous that if these sacrifices were not made Bombay would have shared the benefits now proposed for provinces which face their financial difficulties less resolutely. The Bombay Government deplores that the distribution of income-tax in the provinces is entirely dependent upon the successful running of railway, the position of which is frankly disquieting. It is practically certain that the provinces will receive no share in the income-tax during the first five years and will be fortunate if they receive a substantial share during the second five years.

The net results of the recommendations as far as Bombay Presidency is concerned are that the province is left with no expending source of revenue until such time as a share in the income-tax proceeds is received, is faced with additional expenditure which must follow the introduction of provincial autonomy, and the prospect of being compelled to restore a considerable amount of retrenchment which will swallow up the bulk of the relief accruing from the separation of Sind and will be forced to abandon any hopes of expansion in such directions as education, public health, agriculture, animal husbandry and the like. The Bombay Government consider that the annual benefit from the separation of Sind for the next year to the presidency will not be more than 76 lakhs. Therefore, (the Bombay Government ?) strongly press for the cancellation of the fictitious debt created in respect of unproductive irrigation works.

## SIND GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

It is a matter of some disappointment to the Government of Sind that it has not been found possible in the Niemeyer Report to give assistance to Sind in the form of substantial reduction of the Barrage debt, states a communique containing the Sind Government's views on the Niemeyer Report. In the absence of any reasons in the report why this course is considered inconvenient, the Government of Sind are unable to appreciate why such an arrangement should not be given effect to, but if this be found impossible the proposals in the report are accepted subject to the following remarks: proposals both as regards the annual subvention and the repayment of the Barrage debt to depend upon the forecast of increased revenue due to the barrage proving correct. This can only happen if the normal agricultural and economic condition obtain every year during the next 45 years, but it is impossible to say that this condition will be fulfilled, in particular, the forecast assumes an increase of Rs. 19 lakhs in the revenue in 1947-48 and of increasing amounts for the next 15 years owing to the levy of increased rates of land revenue assessment. The imposition of these rates will also depend upon the then prevailing agricultural and economic conditions. The Government of Sind, therefore, presume that the door will be left open for adjustment of subvention and debt repayment in case the revenue expectations are not realised. In any such readjustment Sind must be assured the minimum revenues required for its needs as a progressive province.

## BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The Government of Bengal accept the proposals contained in paragraph 17 of the Report in regard to the assistance to be given to certain provinces on the introduction of provincial autonomy. They regard the proposals as in the nature of an award given after determination of the amount immediately available for distribution among the provinces and after examination of the budgetary position of the several claimants to that amount. Looked at in this light they cannot but accept them as fair and reasonable, though they are deeply disappointed that the immediate assistance to be given to Bengal, a province in which by reason of what is now admitted to have been an unfair distribution of resources the standard of administration is admittedly low, falls far short of their original expectation.

As regards the proposals relating to the distribution of taxes on income the Government of Bengal while accepting the general scheme desire to raise two points.

In paragraph 30 of the report it is recommended that during the initial period the prescribed sum which centre may in any year retain out of provincial share of the proceeds of the taxes on income shall be the whole or such amount as together with any general budget receipts from the railways will bring the Central Government's share in the divisible total up to 13 crores. At present the divisible total is approximately 12 crores and the Government of Bengal suggest that this is a more appropriate figure. The adoption of this figure will fortify the argument advanced in the report in favour of creating an interest in the provinces in securing improvement in revenue from income tax and railways.

Further the Government of Bengal attach great importance to early distribution of some share in the proceeds of the taxes on income among the provinces. It was recognized on the introduction of the present constitution (vide Devolution Rule 15) that the provinces, particularly industrial provinces, were entitled to a share in the taxes on income and during the last fifteen years the industrial provinces have had a legitimate grievance since that rule failed to give relief for which it was specially designed. In justice to the industrial provinces therefore it is essential that every endeavour should be made to expedite the allocation to the provinces of some share in the proceeds of the taxes on income.

In paragraph 34 of the report the conclusion reached is that substantial justice will be done by fixing the scale of distribution partly on residence and partly on population and in paragraph 35 it is recommended that division among the provinces should be according to the percentages give therein. The same percentage of 20 per cent. is proposed both for Bengal and Bombay. If residence alone had been taken as the determining factor, there would be little difficulty in accepting the parity between Bengal and Bombay, and each would then gain at the expense of other provinces, but the Government of Bengal find it difficult to understand how parity can be justified with population as one of bases for the population of Bengal is nearly three times that of Bombay.

The calculations made with reference to the figures given in table three of paragraph 74 of the report of the Federal Finance Committee (Percy Committee) produce percentages approximately closely to those recommended by Sir Otto Niemeyer in respect of all provinces, except Bengal, Bombay and Assam. As regards Bengal and Bombay the percentages given by these calculations are somewhat below 25 for Bengal, and somewhat above 15 for Bombay. The report does not indicate if weightage has been given to Bombay, but if weightage were to be given anywhere the Government of Bengal would have expected to find it given to Bengal and not to Bombay in view of the fact that

(I) Bombay has obtained fortuitous relief to the extent of ninety lakhs from the separation of Sind and

(II) For many years Bengal has through no fault of her own been compelled to submit to an administrative standard markedly inferior to that of Bombay.

It is possible that the incidence calculated by reference to residence alone was moved in favour of Bombay since the Federal Finance Committee had reported, but in the absence of more detailed information the Government of Bengal find themselves unable to accept the proposal that Bengal and Bombay should be given the same percentage.

As regards the jute export duty the Government of Bengal must reiterate their claim that this should on principle be treated as a provincial source of revenue. The jute export duty was imposed originally as an emergency measure during the war. After the war and up to the onset of the trade depression jute commanded high

prices and the ad valorem incidence of duty was low. In 1924-25 the incidence was between four and five per cent. The position, however, has now changed. The price of jute has fallen enormously whereas the deadweight of duty has remained constant and at to-day's prices the ad valorem incidence is over thirteen per cent. Again the competition by substitutes has increased, for instance, paper bags are now largely used for the transport of cement and the adoption of bull handling of grain is extending. In these changed conditions the Government of Bengal consider it unlikely that the export duty is now passed on to the consumer and in their view it is more probable that it is borne for a greater part by the producer.

The Bengal case was not, however, by any means founded entirely on the present incidence of the duty. There are other cogent arguments, though of a political rather than economic and financial nature. In the first place Bengal can never rest content with a fiscal system which aims at protecting largely at her expense as a consumer the products of other provinces, while taxing her distinctive staple product for the benefit of the Centre, in other words for the benefit of those provinces. In the second place, the prosperity of Bengal is bound up with the prosperity of the jute trade. The Royal Commission on Agriculture of 1926-28 drew attention to the risk of substitutes. They were impressed with the danger to prosperity of Bengal if jute failed to retain its present position and stressed the fact that if jute is to retain that position every effort must be made to maintain the present relative cheapness of jute as compared with other fibres. The provincial Government share to the full these views and are of opinion that it is inherently unsound that the centre which for this purpose means the non-jute producing provinces that will command a majority in the Central Legislature should be financially interested in the taxation of a product with which the prosperity of a comparatively small area is so vitally linked.

The question of export duties was examined at considerable length by the Indian Fiscal Commission and one of the principles they recommended for adoption was that in every case the export duty should be moderate in amount. Whatever the actual incidence may be, it seems clear that the jute export duty to the extent that it falls on the consumer must raise the world price of jute and thus put jute at a disadvantage with its competitors.

Similarly to the extent that it falls on the producer it must reduce the price which the producer would otherwise obtain. As long as the amount of the duty is moderate it does not have an appreciable effect in either of these directions, hence the insistence of the Fiscal Commission on the principle mentioned. Now the jute export duty up to the commencement of the trade depression was moderate in its incidence, but at the present day prices it certainly transgresses that sound principle—the export duty which works out at approximately 13 per cent ad valorem cannot be described as moderate. It appears unlikely that the jute prices will return to the predepression level and the Government of Bengal are therefore of opinion that a reduction of duty must be contemplated in a not distant future.

At present financial considerations do not permit of any reduction of duty and the terms and implications of the report definitely negate the possibility of reduction in future at the expense of the provincial Governments concerned. But unless the assumptions made in the report are entirely falsified, there will be a progressive improvement at the Centre and accordingly the proposal which the Bengal Government put forward for acceptance as part of the present scheme of financial adjustment between the Centre and the provinces is that at a date not later than the end of the first five year period the rate of the duty should be reduced to a figure necessary to produce the amounts not allocated to the provinces plus any sum required for research and that simultaneously the percentage of the proceeds of the duty to be assigned to the jute-producing provinces should be increased so as to give the provinces the whole amount of net proceeds except what is retained by the Centre for research.

The Government of Bengal press most strongly for adoption of the proposal put forward in the preceding paragraph. This does not involve any modification of the orders-in-Council now to be made nor any addition to the resources which the report recommends should be given to Bengal. At the same time it recognises the position as regards the rate of duty and possesses the great political advantage of removing once for all the sense of injustice under which this province has laboured for so many years and which if not now removed will continue to be the prejudice of sound administration and to the exceeding detriment of relations between the Province of Bengal and other parts of India.

### ASSAM GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The Government of Assam have examined Sir Otto Niemeyer's proposals for decentralisation of the balances. It is proposed that all debts contracted prior to the 1st April, 1936, will be cancelled and the province granted an increase in jute export duty, a share at a future date in income tax receipts, and a subvention of 30 lakhs. The Government of Assam assume that the cancellation of previous debts results in the sum provided in the current year's budget for payment of interest and capital of such debts amounting to nearly 19 lakhs being saved and the current year's deficit of 63 lakhs reduced thereby. In the interests of the new constitution this Government would request that the remainder of the current year's deficit so far as it refers to strictly provincial expenditure may also be cancelled. Beyond this point the opinions of the local Government differ to some extent. The Indian member and ministers have read the report with profound disappointment. They were looking forward to the province being made as self-sufficient as possible so that provincial autonomy may have substance. It was with that intention that the Government of Assam presented before Sir Otto in addition to the estimates of normal receipts and expenditure the estimates for such institutions as a high court, a university and medical and technical (including agricultural) schools. They now find that there is not only no room for further progress in making up the essential deficiencies, but on the contrary even on the present scale of expenditure there will still be a deficit of about 25 lakhs to be covered either by taxation or retrenchment. They consider that the economic condition of the people, the bulk of whom are agriculturists, does not permit of additional taxation. Retrenchment on the other hand would entail curtailment of the services rendered at present to the public a prospect which they are confident no ministry under the new constitution will face with equanimity.

Considering all these factors and the slender hope of an early expansion of revenues they think that an additional subvention of 25 lakhs is essentially necessary to put the province on an even keel.

The minority of the local Government though agreeing with a great part of this are not able to accept the position that a deficit of 25 lakhs is involved in the proposals and think that they are such as with some retrenchment will just enable the province to balance its income and expenditure in the opening years of the new constitution, provided that no natural calamity occurs to necessitate heavy additional expenditure. There will be of course no margin for some years to come for any expansion or improvement in the standards of administration the necessity of which has been particularly stressed in the discussions. Especially it is regretted that it will be impossible to establish a university without which the Government cannot control the educational system and an agricultural institute to explore the agricultural needs of the province. The recurring cost of these institutions was estimated at 5 and a half lakhs in papers put before Sir Otto Niemeyer.

### ORISSA GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The following is the full text of the telegram sent by the Orissa Government to the Secretary of State for India and to the India Government on the recommendations of Niemeyer report.

"The proposals require modification on various reasons. The draft budget for 1936-37, on which the Orissa Government is now working, was originally framed after normal budget procedure and scrutiny by parent provinces and further scrutinised by the Government of India. Savings of four and a half lakhs have still to be found to make that budget balance on a basis of subvention of forty and a half lakhs granted this year without encroaching on two lakhs' opening balance. The Government cannot foresee savings of more than one lakh in place of four and a half lakhs although all proposals for the improvement of the present retrenched standard have already been out. Even that saving can only be found by avoiding expenditure which is either obligatory, namely ministers, and bacteriological laboratory in future years. Therefore the revenue deficit of this year, excluding subvention even on low existing post-retrenchment basis, is forty and a half plus three and half lakhs i.e., forty four lakhs. In future years expenditure will rise due to legislative Assembly and other charges which are incidental in the new Constitution.

Moreover, this year's estimate is based on the lowest pay of the time scales of all new establishment which includes the whole Headquarters establishment and will

inevitably increase as the new incumbents draw increments. This year's estimates also include only eleven months' salary instead of twelve of the whole new secretariat and other headquarters staff, whereas the future budget must provide for twelve months. There will also be inevitable increases in other directions, especially in maintenance charges for buildings constructed from the capital grant and roads from the central reserve of the road fund, while the expenditure postponed this year must be eventually incurred. The province is a composite one with different methods of administration in different parts and it is difficult and undesirable to level all parts down to the lowest standard. Therefore, revenue deficit in future years, even on the existing retrenchment basis, will be little less than fifty lakhs and if subvention is limited as proposed to fifty lakhs there will hardly remain any scope for improvement of the existing standard.

In particular, there will be no prospect for many years of improving education, agriculture and health services or of establishing a University. At present Orissa depends on two Universities with little voice in either. Scope for revenue expansion as Sir Otto Neimeyer says, is unusually limited. Two-thirds of the province are partially excluded areas and half of the province is more backward than any part of India except excluded areas. Orissa's special problems of floods and retrenchment of recent years has prevented even poorer maintenance of vital protective works, not to speak of the adoption of any measures recommended by the 1935 Flood Expert Committee. Even with the additional fifty lakhs now proposed, the provision for buildings necessitated by separation is still inadequate since the provincial headquarters, one district head-quarter and two sub-provincial head-quarters have to be built up besides the Central Jail and other necessary buildings. The opening balance of two lakhs given this year will have disappeared by the end of the year. No margin will be left for unforeseen expenditure capital or otherwise or for the working balance. Once it is admitted that certain provinces and centrally administered areas must receive help from Indian revenues, it is fair to aim at some common standard for those areas. But the proposals involve great disparity in treatment among the assisted units, giving to Orissa a subvention far less per head of the population than other units who have already a far higher standard of expenditure per head.

## BIHAR GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

The following are the views of Bihar Government on Niemeyer Report contained in their Telegram to the Secretary of State :—

Paragraph 17—In paragraph II, Niemeyer Report admits as past Committees have admitted that Bihar and Orissa is the poorest province in India. Bihar itself has an extremely dense population. It contributes largely to the wealth of India from its minerals and agriculture but derives no financial advantage as it is not permitted to tax the minerals and is under the disability attaching to no other Provinces except Bengal owing to Permanent Settlement making any increase in land revenue impossible. The existence of mining and industrial areas is consequently an extra financial burden.

Local Government urge strongly that the figure of 45 lakhs asked for by them is the minimum immediate requirements as a grant-in-aid. This figure is fully justified by financial history of the Province which has been starved since it came into existence in 1912 and has had perforce to maintain a lower standard of administration than any other Province of India, which standard has been recently lowered by the policy of retrenchment which has been followed. While 25 lakhs will allow some increase over expenditure in 1936-37 budget provided excise receipts remain stable, this figure takes insufficient account of the factor mentioned above. Assistance proposed is therefore inadequate to start the Province on an even keel as proposed in paragraph 9.

Paragraphs 19 to 21—Bihar debt contracted before 1st April 1936 outstanding on 1st April 1937 will amount to 471 lakhs, of this sum 341 lakhs is pre-reform undated debt carrying interest at the rate of 3 and half per cent, the balance of 130 lakhs is dated repayable in years between 1941 and 1966 of which 80 lakhs is bearing interest varying between 4 and half and 5 and half and balance at 3 and three-fourth or less. If debt were consolidated as Appendix III repayable in 45 years, interest should not exceed 3 and three-fourth per cent, giving an annual instalment of about

21 and three-fourth lakhs. If the debt were not consolidated, the annual budget saving resulting from cancellation of debt would for a few years slightly exceed this figure but would rapidly decrease as loans are rapid and would drop to 12 lakhs in 1956. Not more than 22 lakhs should therefore be taken as maximum annual recurring budget benefit resulting from debt cancellation.

In these circumstances local Government assumed that figure of 22 lakhs in paragraph 21 implied that in case of Bihar no part of decentralised balances would be set off against debt cancellation and the whole of decentralised balances of about 3 crores would be available to local Government for ways and means and for utilisation to secure funds for payment of the new liability for the Provinces after decentralisation of balances, viz., interest of 6 and half lakhs on Provident Funds, which sum is approximately all that can be realised by investment of the balance after providing for ways and means.

The Government of India have, however, advised in response to reference that assumption is incorrect and that Bihar will receive only a single sum of 21 lakhs out of its provincial balances under the scheme of decentralisation, implying that rest of provincial balance will be retained by Government of India as a set off to debt cancellation.

If the Government of India's view is correct, Bihar will not only have to find 6 and half lakhs a year to meet interest on Provident Fund but will be deprived of capital by investment of which this sum might have been produced. Local Government claim that on this theory the benefits which it is intended they should receive will be reduced not only by 6 and half lakhs but by the annual value of the balance of 380 lakhs which will be appropriated by the Government of India. This figure they put at 10 and half lakhs that being the sum by payment of which a debt of 380 lakhs can be repaid in 45 years at 2 and half per cent. The approximate net annual budget saving resulting from debt cancellation is, therefore, if the Government of India's view is correct, reduced to 11 and half lakhs in place of 22 lakhs referred to in paragraph 21.

Local Government cannot believe that Government of India's interpretation is correct in the case of Bihar as on that interpretation the special assistance for Bihar becomes largely fictitious and local Government are convinced that Niemeyer recommendation for net improvement of Bihar finances was intended to be the equivalent of a genuine grant-in-aid of 25 lakhs and this at least the local Government claim should be given without any reduction of decentralised balances. To sum up on Government of India's interpretation the Niemeyer recommendation would only benefit Bihar to the extent of 11 and a half lakhs plus 2 and a half from jute tax in place of 25 lakhs which Sir Otto found necessary in the first instance and to reach Niemeyer figure of requisite assistance from debt cancellation and extra share in jute tax would have to be supplemented by a grant-in-aid of 10 and a half lakhs.

Local Government are more convinced of their interpretation of the intention because under the present proposals they are being deprived of an advantage which will accrue on decentralisation of balances to other provinces which are not held to be in need of immediate assistance. By the method proposed in Appendix III for consolidation of debt, Madras is shown as benefitting to the extent of twenty-six lakhs and Bombay to the extent of fourteen and a half which benefit is lost by provinces whose debts are cancelled by paragraph 21. In fact if the assignment of 45 lakhs claimed by Bihar cannot be given local Government urge that in addition to 25 lakhs grant-in-aid they should be allowed in some way to share the advantage given to provinces on liquidation of their debts against outstanding balances.

Paragraph 35—Local Government's claim was that the basis of distribution should be wholly that of population and they still consider that as the distribution of income-tax is a balancing factor to equalise the opportunities of various provinces, a distribution entirely on this basis would be fair. They would therefore press for an increase to 12 in the percentage allotted to Bihar to compensate in future for past financial starvation of Bihar.

## INDIAN COMMERCE CHAMBER'S VIEW

The Secretary, Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta sent the following to the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance Department:—

I am directed by the Committee of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, to address you on the Indian Financial Enquiry Report submitted by Sir Otto

Neimeyer. The Committee have carefully considered the Report and have to make the following observations.

Sir Otto Niemeyer states in paragraph 3 of the Report that "from the Central point of view, it is clear that the financial stability and credit of India as a whole must remain the paramount consideration." While the Committee did not wish to object to this statement of the position, they desire to point out that the needs and requirements of the Central Government are comparatively limited whereas the functions of the Provinces are capable of indefinite expansion. Most of the services which are socially and economically beneficent to the people of the country are provincial in character, e.g. education, public health, agriculture and industries.

The Committee would, in this connection, recall the observations of Sir Walter Layton in his report on Indian finance embodied in the report of the Indian Statutory Commission presided over by Sir John Simon. Sir Walter Layton stated that "in time of peace military budget should be a stationary or diminishing burden and not an increasing one. National enterprises such as the Post Office and the Railways should feed and not be a charge upon the Central Exchequer; and while the functions of the Central Government in Civil administration may be expected to grow, the expenditure involved is a very small affair indeed, compared with that required for a nation-wide development of education, for the improvement of public health and sanitation, for the services charged with the great task of increasing the economic productivity of India and many other functions which have been definitely placed within the sphere of the Provinces."

The Committee wish to emphasise this aspect of the question which should always be recognised in determining the financial relations between the Central and Provincial Governments in India. Moreover, it is well-known that Provincial sources of revenue are comparatively inelastic while an examination of the new sources of revenue by the Federal Finance Committee presided over by Lord Percy showed that the prospects of increase in the direction also were not encouraging.

It has been the considered view not only of Indian commercial bodies and Indian non-officials but of impartial committees and experts that India is incurring expenditure on the primary functions of Government such as defence and maintenance of law and order which is as high in proportion to her wealth as Western nations, while her expenditure on social services such as education, sanitation, industrial and agricultural improvement, etc., is far behind Western standards and is in many directions almost non-existent. If, therefore, the standard of life of the people as a whole is to be raised, the paramount importance of Provincial finance cannot be ignored.

The present allocation of resources between the Central and Provincial Governments has evoked strong criticism of every expert enquiry from that of Sir Walter Layton to the Percy Federal Finance Committee. The Joint Parliamentary Committee after reviewing such criticisms, stated in paragraph 245 that "from the point of view of expenditure, the essentials of the position are that the Provinces have an almost inexhaustible field for the development of social services while the demands upon the Centre, except in time of war or acute Frontier trouble, are almost constant in character. The Provinces rarely have the means adequate for a full development of their social needs. The resources of the Centre comprise those which should prove most capable of expansion in a period of normal progress." It is also essential to emphasise that the advent of the Indian States into Federal Government would render difficult any subsequent reallocation of fiscal resources and readjustment of financial relationship between the Centre and the Provinces or States.

The Committee also desire to draw attention to some large assumptions made by Sir Otto Niemeyer, which cannot be accepted by Indian public opinion and Indian commercial bodies. For instance, Sir Otto observes that "expenditure at the Centre cannot be expected, consistently with safety, to decrease much below the point to which it has now been reduced." The Committee cannot possibly agree to this proposition in regard to Central expenditure. For example, there is unanimity of opinion on the question that the current expenditure on defence is an unduly heavy item. Sir Walter Layton in his report on Indian Finance, referred to before, observes that the expenditure on defence in India bears to the total expenditure of the Central Government a higher proportion than in any other country of the world and that since the high "defence ratio" in Indian Government expenditure is partly due to the low level of other expenditure, "it remains a peculiarly burdensome one."

Sir Walter Layton also mentions that "a recent comparison of the military expenditure of the nations of the world shows that in this respect India is 7th in the list among the great Powers and that her expenditure on armaments is between two or three times as great as that of the whole of the rest of the Empire outside Great Britain. Again, the total is not only high in itself and as compared with other countries, but it has also greatly increased as compared with the pre-war situation."

But even apart from military expenditure, however, there is no doubt that the cost of general administration is high owing to the level of salaries which bears no proportion to the ability of the tax-payer. The Percy Committee also drew attention to the opinion widely held in India that the cost of Government already exceeds what can properly be borne by a predominantly agricultural country and Sir Walter Layton too recognised the justice of this common complaint about the cost of general administration.

There is no doubt that the entire expenditure of the Government, both Central and Provincial, including the scales of salaries, allowances, etc., needs to be readjusted on the basis of reduced price levels, depressed trade and shrinking revenues. Even apart from war conditions, the hard facts of Indian economy and low average income demand a far less costly administration. The main difficulty in regard to public finance in India arises from the fact that while the expenditure on primary and unproductive functions has been established at an unduly high level, the constructive services are thereby starved unless the people are prepared to tax themselves further even in order to maintain such services.

The Committee need hardly point out that under the New Constitution, nearly 80 per cent of the Central revenues have been mortgaged to the maintenance of military and civil establishments and cannot be touched by the future Federal Legislature. Even railway expenditure will, after the establishment of the Statutory Railway Board, be outside the control of the Federal Legislature. The Committee can hardly feel enthusiastic about the recommendation of a Report whose underlying assumption is that the present exorbitantly high scale of Central expenditure cannot be reduced with the logical corollary that taxation also cannot be reduced. The Central budget has been balanced during the last few years only by making emergency taxation permanent and the credit of the Government and the surplus in the Central budget are hardly reflected in any improvement in the economic condition of the masses.

The Committee regret to point out that no co-ordinated plan of Federal Finance underlies the recommendations of Sir Otto Niemeyer, which are frankly formulated with a desire to placate and accommodate different interests and rival claimants according to their respective political "pull." The Committee are aware that the problem of financial adjustments between the Centre and the Provinces is a very complex and difficult one and has hitherto been dealt with in a somewhat haphazard manner by more than one Committee and expert in the past. It was, therefore, expected that Sir Otto Niemeyer would at least view the problem as a whole and deal with it in a comprehensive manner after determining the needs and capacities of different Provinces.

The Committee would now pass on to Sir Otto Niemeyer's recommendations about Bengal. The Committee are glad to observe that Sir Otto acknowledges that "Bengal is clearly on a low standard" so far as its standard of administration is concerned. He has, therefore, recommended the grant of relief to Bengal as under :—

	Lakhs.
	Per Annum.
Cancellation of debts leading to an annual saving of	Rs. 33
Allocation of additional 12 and half per cent jute export duty, yielding	" 42
Total	Rs. 75

Although these recommendations constitute some improvement on the inequitable Roston Settlement, the Committee regret to observe that full justice has not been done to the claims of Bengal and the unanimous demand of its public have not been adequately met. The Committee see no reason why the Government should not allow the balance of 37 and a half per cent of the jute export duty also to the Provincial Governments. While the general principles enunciated by Sir Otto Niemeyer in paragraph 22 of his Report might be valid, it is essential to point out that they have little application to the peculiar conditions of Bengal. Since Bengal's



economy is directly dependent upon the production trade and manufacture of jute, any revenue derived from this commodity is an integral part of Provincial finance and should, in equality, be assigned to the Province itself. The conditions in this case are rather exceptional owing to jute being a monopoly of this Province.

Moreover, although the duty might and does require revision and reduction both in the interests of jute growers and jute manufacturers, the question cannot receive impartial consideration from the Central Government which would be merely interested in realising revenue from the yield of such a duty. It is, therefore, suggested that the Province which has a primary financial interest in jute, should be allotted the entire proceeds of the duty. The low revenue of Bengal as well as Bihar and Orissa in proportion to their population was also pointedly mentioned in Sir Walter Layton's Report and the public finance of this Province must not be deprived of the yield of a duty whose incidence is almost wholly borne by its people.

The Committee would next refer to the distribution of income-tax. Before coming to this question, however, the Committee would record their strong protest against the observations of Sir Otto Niemeyer in regard to the stabilisation of the present surcharges on Income-tax and Super-tax. The Committee have to point out that these observations are in the nature of "ouster dicta" and do not constitute in any way a part of the Report nor are the recommendations based upon these remarks. Without going into the larger question of reform in the present system of taxation in the country, the Committee would point out that the Government are definitely committed to the removal of these surcharges which were levied owing to an emergency and were of a purely temporary nature. The Committee trust that the Government will not take advantage of the general observations in Sir Otto Niemeyer's Report to perpetuate these surcharges since it would be a breach of the undertaking given by the Government in regard to the removal of these surcharges.

The other general observation of Sir Otto Niemeyer relates to the problem of railway finance. In his Report Sir Otto has made the assignment of income-tax to the Provinces dependent upon improvement in the condition of railway finance. Despite past investigations into the various aspects of this problem, the condition of railway finance is causing serious anxiety and requires immediate and substantial efforts to improve it effectively. The Committee trust that railway expenditure would be completely overhauled and economy effected in all possible directions along with efforts to attract traffic. In this connection the Committee would suggest that the losses on the strategic railways should be charged to the military budget and all waste and extravagance in the railway administration should be prevented. Efforts should also be made to attract traffic and enhance revenue by co-ordination with other means of transport.

As regards the distribution of taxes on income as between the Federation and Provinces as well as between the various Provinces 'inter se,' the Committee have to express disappointment at the recommendations in the Report. As regards the manner of distribution, the Committee cannot help observing that in trying to avoid rigid pendency, Sir Otto Niemeyer has applied a mere rule-of-thumb method which is obviously haphazard. Sir Walter Layton in enunciating the general principles of financial relations stated that the only simple, intelligible and equitable basis of distribution of centrally collected taxes in accordance with the needs of the various Provinces is that of population. This basis has precedents in several Federations including those within the British Empire. The application of the rough-and-ready compromise made by Sir Otto Niemeyer between the principle of residence has been particularly unfortunate so far as Bengal is concerned. For while the Percy Committee recommended for allocation to Bengal the amount of Rs. 405 lakhs out of a total amount of Rs. 1,350 lakhs available for distribution to the Provinces, i. e. 30 per cent of the total amount, Sir Otto Niemeyer recommends the allocation of only 20 per cent to the Province of Bengal. Even taking into account the net total yield of income-tax which was envisaged by the Percy Committee at Rs. 1,720 lakhs, the share of Bengal comes to about 24 per cent.

The Committee of the Chamber also desire to point out that while the percentage recommended in Sir Otto Niemeyer's Report for transfer to the provinces is the percentage ratio of only 50 per cent of the net yield of Rs. 6 crores only at the present figure, the percentage recommended by the Percy Report is the percentage of the total net yield of income-tax, as shown above. Thus in addition to having been severely handicapped along with the other Provinces by Sir Otto Niemeyer's recommendations in regard to the distribution of income-tax only to the

extent of 50 per cent of the net yield. Bengal has been further hit adversely even as regards the allocation of the percentage of this 50 per cent to her.

So far as Bengal is concerned, therefore, the Committee think that the financial relief recommended in Sir Otto Niemeyer's Report would not enable her to expand her social services or pursue a constructive programme of national welfare and they trust that the question of the allocations of the whole of the jute export duty as well as the question of assignment of a really fair share of income-tax revenue would receive the favourable consideration of the Government of India and the Secretary of State before orders on this subject are finally placed on the table of the House of Parliament.

### U. P. COMMERCE CHAMBER'S VIEW

The Committee of the United Provinces Chamber of Commerce addressed the following letter to the Secretary to Government of India, Finance Department, Simla, commenting on the report of Sir Otto Niemeyer that the maintenance of the stability at the Centre should be the main criterion in any financial adjustments between the Centre and the Provinces. They are seriously disappointed to note that Sir Otto considers the present expenditure at the Centre as an irreducible minimum. The Committee have no doubt whatsoever that unless expenditure at the Centre and specially under the heads Army and Home Charges is reduced, the various provinces will never be able to develop the nation-building departments and the condition of the masses would remain as deplorable as it is to-day. The various enquiries which have been held during the past few years into the financial position of the Government have been merely patch-works without even an attempt to touch the main problem, and the enquiries of Sir Otto are no exception. The Committee think that his recommendations are mere palliatives designed to make somehow a start with the plan of the so-called Provincial Autonomy.

"In order to maintain the present expensive machinery at the Centre and possibly to find out additional means for the upkeep of the expensive future Federal Government, Sir Otto has suggested that the rates of income-tax and super-tax in India specially on the higher incomes are by no means excessive. In his opinion the general scheme of Indian taxation (Central and Provincial) operates to relieve the wealthier commercial classes to an extent which is unusual in taxation schemes, and there would be no justifiable ground of complaint if a slight correction of that anomaly were maintained. Although this view of Sir Otto is not apart of his recommendations, still it is likely to pre-judicially affect the interest of commercial classes. The Committee of the Chamber do not agree with the views of Sir Otto that the scheme of Indian taxation operates to relieve the wealthier commercial classes. In their opinion the commercial classes are made to contribute more than they can really afford to. The present surcharges on income and super-tax were imposed at a time when the economic depression was at its height, and it will be nothing less than a breach of faith if the Central Government agrees with the views of Sir Otto and tries to perpetuate the remaining surcharges, when the cut of service has been restored long ago. In order that the views of Sir Otto Niemeyer in this connection may not be taken for granted, the Committee strongly suggest that the present scheme of taxation in the country in general and the commercial classes in particular should be examined without further delay.

"With regard to the financial position of the Railways, the Committee are glad to note that Sir Otto has also taken a serious view of the position. The Chamber along with many important commercial bodies in the country has for a very long time been stressing the necessity for the co-ordination of the various forms of transport and the curtailment of heavy railway expenditure but without any result. The Committee are therefore strongly of the opinion that in the interest of the tax-payer, the existing position of Railway expenditure should be immediately examined, by an expert Committee with a majority of non-official members from the Legislature and the public life of the country. The Committee think that unless the position of the Railways is examined and waste is stopped the condition of the Central Budget can never be improved and the Railways may once again become a drain on the public purse.

"The Committee welcome the decentralisation and consolidation of debt charges and the annual subvention of Rupees 25 lakhs for five years granted to the United Provinces, but they are disappointed to find that the United Provinces has been recommended only 15 per cent share in the residue of income-tax whereas, other

deficit provinces e. g., Bengal have been granted a bigger share in income-tax residue in addition to the Jute Tax. The committee hope that the Central Government would press for adequate relief to the United Provinces Government in the matter, and thereby enable it to keep up the higher standard of work in various department'.

### ORISSA COMMERCE CHAMBER'S VIEW

The Orissa Chamber of Commerce considered the recommendations of Sir Otto Niemeyer in regard to the subvention to Orissa and issued a statement in the course of which it regards to observe that Sir Otto did overlook the responsibilities devolved on the Governor to administer the partially excluded area in Orissa, a permanent deficit area, being 60 per cent of the total area of Orissa and incurring even now a deficit of Rs. 28 lakhs on the present low standard of administration.

'Thus', the statement continues, 'neither the Orissa Legislative Assembly is left with any expanding revenue to spend on nation-building departments nor the Governor is left with the option to draw any appreciable sum from the general receipt of Orissa to develop these partially excluded areas. On the other hand, any strict interpretation of his responsibilities, by the Governor, will create undesirable and constant friction between him and the legislature'.

The Chamber strongly disapproves 'the arbitrary and pedantic system of distribution of income-taxes to the provinces as suggested, and recommends that it should be on a purely population basis and apprehends "undesirable bickerings and complications when the Federal Legislature will distribute Federal excises to the provinces". If the system of distribution be accepted.

The Chamber in conclusion feels that the recommendations of Sir Otto Niemeyer in regard to the help from the centre is inadequate and condemns Orissa adequate subvention so as to ensure reasonable 'per capita' expenditure in the province to raise Orissa's economic and trade prosperity and provide reasonable minimum expansion to the particular excluded areas.

# **The U. P. Unemployment Committee Report**

## **(SAPRU COMMITTEE REPORT)**

The following is a summary of the main conclusions and recommendations of the U. P. Unemployment Committee, as given in the report itself and published in January 1936 :—

### **CIVIL ENGINEERS**

Unemployment amongst civil engineers has increased since the stoppage of recruitment to the Buildings and Roads Branch and has become much more acute since the stoppage of recruitment in the Irrigation Branch consequent on the financial depression since 1931. It is recommended—

- (1) that the policy adopted in connection with Buildings and Roads in 1922 should be reconsidered and revised to secure adequate supervision to all Government buildings and roads ;
- (2) that stringent rules and regulations should be laid down to make it compulsory for Municipal and District Boards to have qualified engineers and overseers to maintain the roads and buildings under their control in efficient condition ;
- (3) that in order to secure reliability and efficiency of execution of contract work it should be ruled that A and B class contractors must have qualified engineers as employers or partners and all C class contractors should similarly have overseers as partners or employers ;
- (4) That to secure compliance with these recommendations the existing laws and rules may be amended, if necessary.

### **MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS**

Some arrangements should be made for affording opportunities to Mechanical and Electrical Engineering students for receiving practical training. For instance, while placing Government orders with firms it may be stipulated that subject to other terms and prices being the same, preference will be given to firms that will afford facilities for practical training of Indian engineers recommended by Government.

### **GRADUATES IN MINING AND METALLURGY**

- (1) The students trained at the Engineering College, Benares, have, hitherto, generally, been successful in securing employment somewhere or other in India ;
- (2) There is scope, both in British India and in the Indian states, particularly in those where there are mines, for the employment of men, trained in mining and metallurgy, but unfortunately, young men belonging to the United Provinces have hitherto been slow in availing themselves of the educational facilities offered by that University ;
- (3) It is necessary that some well-thought-out system for imparting such practical training to civil, mechanical and electrical engineers should be provided, and this may necessitate some consultation with, and co-operation on the part of some departments of the Government, factories and the big industries, in these provinces, and possibly outside. The preparation of such a scheme should be left to experts. Steps may also be taken to prepare a scheme to complete the practical side of the education of mechanical and electrical engineers so that they be fit for immediate employment by the Government and industrial concerns.

### **CHEMIST**

While graduates in chemistry succeed more than others in getting employment they are not always fairly treated by their employers. The employers not unoften break their contracts with their employees. The remedy for these trained scientific employees is to organize themselves to enable them to deal effectively with unsatisfactory and unsympathetic employers.

### **PRODUCTS OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE**

No recommendations regarding the products of the Technological Institute can be made, as the percentage of employment among them is high and very satisfactory.

## BACHELORS OF COMMERCE

(1) The B. Com.'s of the Allahabad and Lucknow Universities have been particularly fortunate but this good luck has not attended the careers of those who have taken degrees in Commerce from the other provincial universities. The utility of the B. Com.'s is considerably discounted partly because of prejudice among Indian businessmen and partly because—and seems to us to be true—that their education is almost theoretical and does not fit in with what is required by commercial houses or business offices.

(2) All universities, which provide for instruction in the Bachelor of Commerce course, should make arrangements for some practical training being given to their B. Com. students, in consultation with the possible employers of such men, so that they may have some idea of work done in commercial houses or those departments of Government, where there may be scope for their employment.

## MEDICINE

(1) There is a considerable amount of unemployment prevailing in the medical profession in these provinces due to the tendency of the medical practitioners to congregate in big towns and cities where the remuneration is higher than in the rural areas though precise figures are not available ;

(2) The system of medical relief in hospitals, maintained by Government or district boards or municipal boards, requires organisation and the strengthening of the staffs employed ;

(3) It is necessary that medical men should be persuaded to settle down in rural areas in large numbers and for this purpose, it is necessary to subsidize them on a more generous scale than has hitherto been done ;

(4) Investigation should be made into the efficacy of the indigenous drugs according to the modern methods and after the recognition of such medicines by the medical profession and their standardization, industries for the manufacture of such and other drugs should be started, and, if necessary, subsidized at the initial stages. If this is done, it should provide employment for a sufficiently large number of qualified medical men ;

(5) There is room for the complaint that the system under which a single man is appointed to treat patients, for all sorts of diseases, cannot be treated as a very modern or an up-to-date system. The attachment of private practitioners to hospitals, maintained by Government or local boards, should be encouraged so as to give the private practitioners a chance of becoming more efficient.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

(1) This department can provide scope for the employment of a fairly large number of educated men ;

(2) Posts of assistant superintendents of vaccination, which have, hitherto, been given to men who are not even Matriculates, should in future be given to men who possess some medical or scientific knowledge ;

(3) The number of medical officers employed in municipalities, admits of an increase, and such municipalities as have not got medical officers of health of their own, should be asked to employ qualified men ;

(4) New schemes of sanitary improvement, both in the towns and the villages should be taken in hand, and qualified medical men, possessing some diploma or degree in Public Health, should be employed by district boards ;

(5) That more adequate provision should be made for medical inspection and treatment of school-going children in the provinces and for that purpose the strength of the medical staff should be increased ;

(6) If the district boards have not got sufficient funds to employ qualified medical officers, they should be helped, as far as possible, by Government with financial assistance, unless, by a re-arrangement of their budget, or by fresh taxation specially for this purpose, it is possible for the district boards to find the necessary funds.

## SUBSIDIARY BRANCHES OF MEDICINE

(1) The system which has been in vogue, in these provinces, since January, 1926 for the training of compounders, appears to be wholly inadequate, and falls short of the standards suggested in Colonel Chopra's report ;

(2) Provision should be made for the training of men in pharmacy, and the necessary qualifications should be prescribed by the rules and regulations, for those,

who may seek such education, and after an examination, held by a duly constituted authority, the successful candidates should be granted a diploma ;

(3) In future, Government should employ, exclusively, in their hospitals and dispensaries, such qualified men as pharmacists ;

(4) Suitable legislation should be passed, organizing this profession, examination, and the grant of diploma, and penalizing the employment by private agencies of unqualified men.

#### DENTISTRY

A school of dentistry should be established at King George's Medical College, Lucknow, and suitable legislation, modelled on the English Act of 1921, should be passed, prohibiting, in future, the practice of dentistry by persons, other than those on the dentists' register, kept by the Dental Board of these provinces, to be created by that Act.

#### LAW

(1) The legal profession, in these provinces, is far too crowded, with the consequence that there is a great deal of unemployment in it. It is, and out to be, a very honourable profession ; but it has lost a great deal of prestige, in these provinces, and, unless some measures are taken to recognise the profession, we are afraid that in a few years' time, the conditions of the profession will be even worse.

(1) Lawyers practising in these provinces should be divided, at their option, into two classes, viz.

(a) those, who will restrict themselves, exclusively, to the proper function of a counsel, that is to say, who will appear, in courts of law, to examine witnesses, to argue cases, and to do all other work, which properly falls within the province of a counsel ;

(b) those, who will apply themselves, exclusively, to the drafting of legal documents, and doing all such other acts, as may be necessary, for the completion of a legal transaction, or the progress of a law suit or a legal proceeding in a court of law. In their case partnerships should not only be allowed but encouraged.

(2) A member of one class should not be allowed to encroach upon the province of the other, though it should be open to a member, who merely 'acts' to consult a person performing the function of a counsel.

(3) Arrangements should be made, by the universities and the Bar Council, for giving training to law students at the various universities, in conveyancing, drafting and pleadings.

(4) Legislation should be passed, in order to guard against the evils resulting from the employment of unqualified draftsman, and also to protect trained lawyers doing the work of draftsman. It is necessary that there should be some legislation, providing that no petition or application by a litigant, which he intends to present to a court of law, shall be drawn up, for him, by anyone, except a qualified lawyer ; and, further, that a registrable document shall not be received, for registration, by the Registration department, unless, on the face of it, it bears the certificate of a qualified lawyer that it has been drafted by him on instructions received from the executant, an exception being provided in the case of a testamentary document, which a person writes in his own hand, or where such a document is written, for him and at his instance, by any person, other than a qualified lawyer under circumstances, in which it could not be written or drawn up by a qualified lawyer or draftsman.

(5) While a student may attend the chambers of a practising lawyer (during the course of his studies, or even after taking his law degree, if that is considered to be necessary, the old rule which required, in the case of a vakil, that he should have put in some years of practice in a district court, before he applied for permission to practice at the High Court, should be restored.

(6) A senior bar should be created and there should be the institution of King's Counsel, which prevails not only in Self-Governing Dominions, but also in some of the Crown colonies, provided, of course, that those who shall accept the higher status, shall also accept all the obligations, which are accepted by King's Counsel in England.

(1) (a) The subject of legal education at the universities must receive greater attention than it has hitherto done, provision being made for adequate instruction in subjects, which have hitherto not received due attention.

(b) A Council of Legal education should be created consisting of the representatives of :—

- (i) the teachers of Law and Civics ;
- (ii) some eminent lawyers whose function must be to promote higher legal education ; (iii) some judges.
- (2) The course of study for a Law degree should not be less than three years ;
- (3) There must be liaison established between the Faculty of Law and the Bar Council, and the work of teaching should be divided between the two ;
- (4) A larger number of teachers, more adequately paid than they are, at present, should be employed for legal education ;
- (5) Coordinated action must be taken, by all the universities in these provinces ; and
- (6) If the lengthening of the course of study should affect the candidates for judicial service adversely, in respect of the age qualification, the rules should accordingly be changed.

#### OTHER PROFESSIONS

- (1) There is great need for creating and developing some new professions, so as to provide new careers for our young men.
- (2) Apart from such professions, as pharmacy and dentistry, professions, such as accountancy, architecture, librarianship, insurance work, secretariat work, and journalism, can be, and should be created in these provinces. Instruction in accountancy, and insurance work, and secretariat work, should be provided for by the universities, along with, or in addition to, the course prescribed for the B. Com. Examination. They should institute separate diplomas in all these subjects. Possibly some of the subjects could be taught, at an earlier stage, in the secondary schools or the intermediate colleges.
- (3) The universities should arrange for a course of instruction in journalism and librarianship and should institute diplomas in these subjects.
- (4) We think the very meagre instruction in architecture now given at Roorkee should be expanded into a separate diploma class in architecture, branching off from the main civil engineering class after the first year. We recommend this because the subject of architecture has considerable kinship with the subject of civil engineering for which the Roorkee College is the best institution in this country.

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICE

- (1) There are certain departments, which are admittedly overworked, and there are certain others, such as United Provinces Service of Engineers, class (ii), irrigation, Hydro-electric branch, which are waiting for development.
- (2) There are other departments, such as Public Health, which are said to be overworked and there are certain other departments like Medical, in which recruitment, though, not wholly stopped, has been restricted. Apart from the fact that such restriction has caused unemployment, it has also affected the efficiency of these departments.
- (3) A considerable amount of unemployment must be attributed to the retrenchment of about 2,000 to 3,000 employees, in the Settlement department.
- (4) The United Provinces Civil Judicial Service appears to be particularly overworked, and in the interest of efficiency, and to avoid delays in disposing of judicial work, the strength of the cadre of the judicial service, and the staffs of civil courts, should be increased.
- (5) It is impossible to make any definite recommendations, as to the restorations of posts in certain departments, or the new posts to be added as this is a matter for separate departmental inquiries but ;
  - (a) Government should take in hand, either directly or through small departmental committees, the question of restoration of posts, which have been retrenched, or the addition of such posts as may be necessary, having regard to the nature of work in each department, and the arrears that there may be in it. Probably, such restoration could not take place, all at once, but there must be a graduated scheme of restoration, and plans for such development should be prepared by the departments concerned.
  - (b) Except in regard to those appointments, for which university education is necessary or useful, own standards for subordinate services and recruit new men, either through competitive examination, or by selection, according to the needs of each department.
  - (c) In regard to the subordinate services, which attract by far the largest number of our young men, the age-limit for entrance should be reduced. This will prevent a great deal of wastage at the universities, by enabling young men, after the comple-

tion of their secondary school education, to enter life, without the necessity of possessing university degrees.

(d) The Public Service Commission, which has been recommended under the new constitution for the provinces, should be created at an early date, and in future, the conduct of competitive examinations, and generally, the recruitment of candidates for such appointments, should be placed in the hands of Public Service Commission.

(e) There must be a Local Self-Government service created, and appointments, which are, at the present moment, made by municipal and district boards, and in regard to which there is very unhealthy canvassing, should, in future, be filled up, out of a waiting list of candidates, maintained by the Ministry of Local Government. When a board, municipal or district, desires to fill up a certain appointment, it must apply to the Ministry concerned, and the Ministry concerned, may, in the case of each appointment suggest three names, out of which the board may select any. Rules and regulations with regard to such service, employments, security of tenure, promotions, etc., should be framed, and in the event of dismissal, a member of such service should have a right of appeal to the Ministry of Self-Government, or the Public Service Commission.

(f) The rules, regarding the age of retirement, should be rigorously enforced, and with a view to give a fair chance to young men, no extension should be granted, to any public servant, after he has completed the 55th year of his age.

(g) Men, who have retired from Government service, should not be employed by local bodies, if and when, young men, possessing the necessary qualifications, are available for such appointments.

#### AGRICULTURE—AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTES AND THEIR PRODUCTS

(1) There is appreciable unemployment among the students who have received training at the Agricultural College, Cawnpore, and such men do not appear to have been employed, in any appreciable numbers, by big zamindars, in these provinces.

(2) There is justification, for the complaint, that the education, which is given to the students of the Agricultural College, and also at the agricultural schools, is more theoretical than practical. Steps should be taken, to provide for some practical training in agriculture institutes, and where it is possible, they should be attached, for a certain period of time, to Government farms, or *samsindaris*, to enable them to acquire some practical knowledge of the working of agricultural operations, and the institution of *samsindaris*. At the end of the practical training such students should receive a certificate of their fitness as practical farmers from some competent authority which may be prescribed by the Ministry of Agriculture.

(3) It is desirable that graduates and the diploma holders of the Government colleges and schools should be encouraged to follow scientific farming within the provinces as a means of earning their living and recruitment for Government service in the department should be made from among these graduates and diploma holders who have done practical farming for a certain number of years. In the case of such men the rules relating to age for recruitment should be amended accordingly. Further it is necessary, to strengthen the Government Agricultural department by the addition of its staff of scientifically trained farmers with practical experience.

#### AGRICULTURE AS A PROFESSION

(1) It is extremely doubtful whether the schemes of colonization, which have been taken in hand, will make any appeal, to that section of the educated classes, which has no connection with land, though, it is likely, that such schemes may be helpful in removing unemployment, in the case of those among the educated classes, who belong to the agricultural community, or who have no connections with village life, or who have imbibed, in their early life, some agricultural tradition.

(2) It is very doubtful as to whether subsidiary industries, such as fruit-growing, dairy-farming, market gardening, floriculture, sericulture, poultry-farming, canning, pisciculture, spinning and weaving, carpet-making, clay-modelling, soap-making, pottery, cattle-breeding, will attract a large number of our educated men, unless they are adequately trained and financed, or subsidized for such industries, though several of these industries, can be, and should be, developed, with advantage to the country.

(3) The development of dairy-farming is a possible avenue of progress provided, the law, relating to the adulteration of food-supplies is stiffened, and an adequate knowledge of the subject and funds are available, and the public are prepared to pay for unadulterated milk and products.

(4) There is scope, for the employment of educated men, as farm managers, and as estate managers, provided, proper training is given to young men, and arrangements



made for giving them opportunities, to acquire practical knowledge of these subjects. In this matter, it is necessary that the point of view, of the big zamindars, should also undergo a change.

(5) The provincial Government should press the Central Government to take steps to inaugurate some policy which will raise the price level of agricultural products in the country. *Vide* Mr. Mr. T. Gavin Jones' note on page 243 of this report which we commend to the careful consideration of the Government.

#### INDUSTRIES

(1) To supplement the result of the industrial survey made in the years 1931-32 and in view of the altered situation a detailed industrial and economic survey, of these provinces, should be made, with a view to find out what industries, big or small, can be developed.

(2) Industrial research workshops should be established, and, if possible, they should be located at different university centres, where there are good science laboratories, or at important industrial centres.

(3) The grid system under the control of Sir William Stampe, which has already found employment for a number of educated men, should be further developed and cheap electricity should be supplied, for the development of big industries, as can be run, more effectively and cheaply, by the use of power.

(4) So far as small-industries, i.e. these provinces, are concerned, a special official should be deputed to Bengal, to study the working of the Bengal scheme, referred to, in our report; and, subject to adaptations to local needs and conditions, a scheme, for helping educated young men, in starting small industries, should be prepared, and a beginning should be made, in this respect, in certain centres, in these provinces. Not only should the young men, adopting such careers, be subsidized, under rules framed by the local Government, but they should also be helped, by expert advice.

(5) For the proper organisation and development of small industries, Government should take steps to collect authoritative information in regard to the running of small industries in Japan and in European countries.

(6) The recommendations of the Industries Reorganization Committee, in regard to sugar and oil, deserve support and the claims of the textile and leather industries may also be pressed, but if Government are called upon, by private capitalists, to give them any assistance in this matter, it must be on the distinct understanding, that they will employ a certain number of qualified educated men, for technical work, in their concerns, irrespective of any considerations of caste or creed.

(7) The glass industry is an industry, in which the provinces are more vitally interested, and, therefore, the decision of the Government, refusing to accept the recommendations of the Tariff Board, for the protection of glass industry, should be revised. If the glass industry receives any assistance from the Government, Government should demand, from those interested in it, that they shall employ a certain number of qualified educated young men, belonging to these provinces, in their concerns. So far as the recommendations of the Industries Reorganisation Committee include the development of glass industry they also deserve support.

(8) The recommendations of the Industries Re-organisation Committee that special attention should be paid to the marketing of the products of cottage industrialists, giving them expert advice, and carrying on experimental research work, should be given effect to.

(9) Steps should be taken—

(a) to bring qualified educated men into touch with commercial houses for employment; and

(b) to foster and encourage the organization of co-operative stores, wherever possible, employing educated men who have received proper training in salesmanship etc.

(10) Particularly, the recommendation of the Industrial Finance Committee that the minor industries and many of the cottage industries in the United Provinces require some better form of organisation, than that provided by the Arts and Crafts Emporium, to link the purchaser with the manufacturer, to improve the quality of work produced by artisans, to help them financially and to obtain for them more remunerative prices is supported.

For all these purposes, an institution working on joint stock lines bearing the title of the United Provinces Financing and Marketing Company, Limited, should be established at an early date. Such a company, by itself, should secure employment to a certain number of educated men, and if the work of marketing is developed, it may provide employment to a number of trained men.

(11) It is essential to the development of industries that the present system of the adjustment of railway goods freight rates should be considered by a competent committee appointed to examine into the incidence of railway freight charges on the industries of the country with a view to the encouragement and development of industries and the internal trade of the country, found advisable to appoint a permanent railway freight tribunal to fix railway freight throughout India in the interest of all concerned.

(12) (a) The Director of Industries department should be an expert in industrial matters and possess a larger number of experts for technical advice on such industries, major or cottage, as may be developed; and that the head of the department should be a practically trained industrialist.

(b) The department should have a separate and well organized intelligence and publicity branch, which should furnish necessary information, to industrialists and persons, interested in industrial careers, by publishing leaflets, or pamphlets, on various industries and giving the necessary information, in regard to each one of them.

#### TECHNICAL, INDUSTRIAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

(1) There is a great and growing demand, for the expansion of industrial and vocational education in these provinces.

(2) The following recommendations of the Kharegat Committee are supported :—

(a) that there must be adequate facilities for industrial training;

(b) that, in addition to fully staffed and well-equipped central schools and commercial extension courses, arrangements should be made, for giving an industrial bias to the training, imparted at general educational schools;

(c) that arrangements should be made with firms, factories as master craftsmen for taking students as apprentices, suitable fees being paid to them, for the purpose.

(d) that elementary industrial schools for boys, and tutorial classes for artisans, should be maintained;

(3) The right course to follow would not be to diminish the existing facilities for technical education but to recognize and remodel them so as to make them more efficient.

(4) It is not enough to establish new industrial or vocational schools, or to remodel or re-organize the existing ones, without, at the same time, creating an agency, for placing the products of these technical schools, and for establishing them in new careers. Without this, the multiplication of the industrially and vocationally trained young men, who cannot settle down in life, may accentuate the problem of unemployment and may create fresh difficulties, both for Government and society.

(5) Regional vocational guidance authorities, consisting of teachers and representatives of other interests, such as commerce and industry, should be created, by the Ministry of Industries, in these provinces. The vocational guidance authorities should not only take an interest in vocational education, but should also be under an obligation to establish contacts with educational institutions and actual industries of the locality or the neighbourhood and to help the products of such schools, in securing employment in such industries.

(6) Where there exists a large and well-defined industrial or commercial area, within the territory of a district or a group of districts, regional committees, to look after the educational interests of that area and to help qualified young men, should be created.

(7) The importance and necessity, of developing apprenticeship industries and crafts, should be emphasized. This will only revive a very old tradition in Indian industries and crafts.

(8) Government should undertake, through the Industries department, or any other department, the publication of pamphlets, regarding the careers, more or less, on the models of the pamphlets, issued by the Board of Education or the Ministry of Labour in England.

#### ADVICE TO PARENTS AND BOYS AS TO CAREERS

(1) Some steps should be taken to afford advice to parents, in regard to the intellectual capacity of their boys, and their suitability for certain careers.

(2) Head masters assisted by other teachers in these provinces, should be asked to carefully watch the intellectual capacity of the boys from the very start of their school education.

(3) If there are no psycho-technical experts available among the head masters or school masters, who have made a study of modern psychological methods, in the

field of educational and vocational guidance, then one or two experts should be engaged, for a temporary period, from England, who would give the necessary training to our school masters, or, in the alternative, two or three school masters from India should be deputed to England, on other foreign countries, for the study of these methods, so that, on their return, they may help in the development of these methods in these provinces.

(3) Arrangement should be made for the study of and research in experimental and educational psychology in various universities.

#### OUR RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO EDUCATION 'GENERALLY

(1) While it should be the aim of primary education to remove illiteracy, it should also be its principal aim to qualify boys, to become better agriculturists, and more useful members of village communities. Primary education, as it is given at present, is ineffective partly because it does not lay sufficient emphasis upon rural and agricultural needs, and partly because the age-limit is too low.

(2) Primary education should be brought more into line with rural needs and agricultural conditions, and enable boys, reading at primary schools, to become more efficient members of the agricultural community.

(3) The age-limit for the purpose of primary education, should be raised to 12 or 13 and every child should remain at school for at least six years. If this is done primary education will not only become more efficient, but also find employment for a number of teachers.

(4) We strongly recommend that the compulsory primary education be extended all over the province as in our opinion without it economic prosperity cannot be built up. In this connection for the spread of primary and adult education it is worthwhile considering how far the agency of broadcasting can be called in aid.

#### SECONDARY EDUCATION

(1) The underlying policy of the resolution of the local Government, in regard to the secondary education, dated Aug. 8, 1934, is sound, and the High School Examination should have two kinds of certificates—one certifying completion of the course of secondary education and qualifying for admission to industrial Commercial and agricultural schools and the other qualifying for admission to Arts and Science colleges.

(2) The intermediate course, if the high School course is curtailed by one year, should be extended to three years, and should be of four parallel types: (1) Industrial, (2) Commercial, (3) Agricultural and (4) Arts and Science.

(3) Secondary schools should provide much more diversified courses of study, care being taken to give more practical, than theoretical, education to the boys.

(4) The industrial courses in secondary schools should aim at giving technical training, of general character, designed to develop skill of hand and eye and cultivate practical aptitudes, so as to predispose them towards industrial life.

Proper agencies should be created, for advising boys, as to their careers.

#### UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

1. The number of students, seeking admission into the universities, has increased appreciably.

2. No arbitrary limit, for the admission of students into the universities, should be prescribed in view of the recommendations of (a) secondary education, (b) technical and vocational education (c) reduction of age-limit, for the appointment to subordinate Government service etc., which will have the effect of automatically reducing the number of students at the universities.

3. While no arbitrary limit to admission of students should be prescribed, there should be greater strictness exercised, in the matter of admission. The universities should be under no obligation, to take in men, who have passed their Intermediate Examination or School Leaving Examination, in third class, except in rare circumstances, when the Admission Committee is satisfied that the student has taken the third class, due to illness, or some other satisfactory reason, but is likely to do well at the university.

4. While education, in what are called humanities, is concerned, universities should not be discouraged, greater stress should be laid on scientific and vocational education.

5. So far as research work, conducted at the universities is concerned, universities

should study the need of industries, and encourage such research, in particular, as may be of practical use to the industries.

6. There should be some system of co-ordination between different universities so as to secure the uniformity of standards and prevent unhealthy competition.

7. Steps should be taken to establish contacts between the science department of the universities and industrialists and businessmen, and such departments of the universities should devote themselves, not solely, or exclusively, to higher academic research in abstract branches of scientific knowledge, but also undertake research, which may prove to be helpful to the industries, or to the economic development of the country. If, for this purpose, it is necessary to give more funds to the science departments of the universities, such funds should be given to them.

8. An advisory committee should be constituted to advise the Ministry of Education, in regard to the grants, that are to be made to the universities for research work, and that on such advisory committees not only the universities but also business, trade, industry and agriculture, should be represented. This may, ultimately, lead to the establishment of a Council of Research.

9. The problem of Indian students, in England, requires careful consideration, and both Government and Indian parents should exercise greater discrimination, in sending young men to foreign countries, merely for academic education, while those, who are likely to benefit by education at Oxford or Cambridge, or other British or foreign universities, or who go there, with the object of carrying on post-graduate research work, should certainly receive encouragement.

#### BOARDS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. An Appointment Board, for the graduates of all the five universities, in these provinces, including the products of such institutions, as the Harcourt Butler Technological Institute, the Agricultural Colleges, Allahabad, Cawnpore, and the Engineering College at Roorkee should be established more or less, modelled on the Appointments Board at Cambridge.

2. The Appointments Board should consist of the vice-chancellors of the universities, certain heads of departments, such as education, industries and agriculture, and some public men, and a certain number of businessmen, European and Indian.

3. Power should be given to this board, to appoint a working committee.

4. This Board should be financed, partly by Government and, partly by the universities.

5. Similarly, there should be a board created, for the products of secondary schools, intermediate colleges, vocational schools, medical and agricultural schools and industrial schools, and this board should consist of the director of public instruction, directors of industries and agriculture, head masters, inspectors of schools, and a certain number of non-officials, zamindars and businessmen. This board should be financed by Government.

6. These boards should be required to collect statistics of employment among the graduates, of the universities, and the products of secondary schools, and intermediate colleges, etc. and from the sources indicated in no. (1).

The following were the signatories of the Report :—

Tej Bahadur Sapru, Ahmad Said, Jwala Prasad, Anand Sarup, A Siddiqui, T. Gavin Jones, Sam Higginbottom, Tara Chand, Sohan Lal Srivastava

# Official Review of Indian Polity

## The Bengal Administration Report 1934-35

The following extracts are taken from the Report on the Administration of Bengal 1934-35 :—

Unlike several of its immediate predecessors, the year 1935 was one of general calm. Civil disobedience defeated in 1932 and discredited in 1933, had been formally discontinued in 1934, and the number of civil disobedience convicts in the Provincial jails fell during the year from 20 to 8.

No alternative form of political agitation had been substituted for this movement; and the reforms effected by Mr. Gandhi at the Bombay session of the Congress in October, 1934, followed as they were by his own virtual retirement from the political arena, tended to weaken in Bengal the hold of an organisation, the leaders of which made little secret of their disgust at the Province's twin troubles of terrorism and party faction.

It was not therefore surprising that in the course of the year the cleavage between Bengal Congressmen and the Working Committee of Congressmen which contained but one representative of this Province, became more pronounced; or that the Congress Socialist Party increased its influence at the expense of the more orthodox and conservative elements in the movement. Dissatisfaction with the attitude of neutrality adopted by the Working Committee towards the Communal Award, and discontent at its failure to arouse any organized public opinion against the approaching Reforms, found frequent expression in certain sections of the Nationalist Press.

There was little evidence of enthusiasm, and apathy and indifference prevailed. The celebrations of "Independence Day" in January were of so undistinguished a character that they do not merit further reference; but it was significant that certain Congress newspapers frankly derided as moral formulae, lacking the essential ingredients of political principles, the resolutions proposed by the Working Committee for repetition on this occasion.

In February certain sections of the Press expressed disgust at the failure of the Congress group in the Legislative Assembly to take a firm stand against the Communal Award. During the same month the tendency towards the acceptance of Socialist and Communist ideas found expression in virulent speeches delivered at a series of meetings held in Calcutta under the auspices of two allied Communist ideas found expression in virulent speeches delivered at a series of meetings held in Calcutta under the auspices of two allied Communist organizations, and in March Government found it necessary to prescribe, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908, thirteen associations of a subversive nature. Further violent speeches followed this action, and in consequence all meetings and demonstrations were banned in Calcutta for a period of three months.

This necessity for the measures adopted was established by the recovery of quantities of subversive literature from the premises of these organizations, and by the repeated demands for violent and massed action which issued from their platforms; while the presence of Congressmen at the meetings concerned, and the attitude adopted by the Congress Press towards Government's measures, indicated a further attempt to bring the forces of Labour within the Congress fold.

In April the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee held its annual Conference at Dinajpur. The occasion excited comparatively little interest, several prominent Congress workers were absent, and less than 700 visitors attended the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition.

There was a pronounced Socialist atmosphere about the Conference, the Congress Socialist group distributed a large number of leaflets, and "Workers and Peasants" were the theme of many speeches. Despite the protests of the Muhammadan delegates, who left the Conference in a body the rejection of the Communal Award was carried by large majority; the resolutions were adopted eulogizing the services rendered by those who "suffered" during the civil disobedience campaign, and protesting against the repressive policy of Government.

Practical decisions, however, were conspicuous by their absence, and the attitude adopted towards terrorism was typical of that presented by Congress as a whole. The Chairman of the Reception Committee denounced the terrorists; the President of the Conference expressed disapproval of their activities, but was more emphatic in the condemnation of Government's methods of combating them; while a Member of the Legislative Assembly referred openly to the "martyrdom of death-defying youths," and praised their "patriotism, self-sacrifice, and heroism."

The Conference cannot be said to have made any appreciable contribution to current politics, and it merely demonstrated the extent to which the views of the Congress Socialists were obtaining a hold in Bengal, and the dissatisfaction of local leaders with the policy of the All-India Congress Committee.

The meeting of this Committee at Jubbulpore did little to heal the breach, for the question of Congress's attitude towards the new constitution was shelved, and a growing divergence of opinion became apparent between the supporters of the Left and the adherents of the Right. During the month of May several Nationalist newspapers awoke to these facts and leading articles referred to the "crisis before the Congress," to the necessity of either expelling or absorbing the Congress Socialists, and to the superiority of their definite proletarian objectives over the vague capitalist ideals of the Congress creed itself. An alliance between Congress and Trade Unionism was advocated as essential to the attainment of Purna Swaraj.

Few efforts, however, were made to put these theories into practice, and there was little noticeable Congress activity in the middle of the year. In a few districts recruitment of members was, indeed, intensified, but in the majority of instances the immediate object in view was the capture of seats on Local Boards. Even the All-India Village Industries Association, which had been set up at Mr. Gandhi's instance for the purpose of rural reconstruction, aroused remarkably little enthusiasm in Bengal, and a visit of one of its members to the district of Murshidabad in July, produced few practical results.

Throughout the year the Congress Press adopted an attitude of hostility towards the Report of the Joint Select Committee and the Government of India Bill, but the actual passage of the Bill through Parliament excited an interest that was characterised mainly by its almost fatalistic acceptance of the inevitable; and when in July the Working Committee at Wardha again postponed a decision on the question of the acceptance of office by members of the Congress, one Nationalist newspaper in Calcutta published a trenchant "leader", advocating the capture of the Legislature and the Cabinets and the acceptance of office under the new constitution. It was repeatedly contended that Bengal had been "let down" by Congress Headquarters, and that the Province must be allowed freedom of action in respect of the Reforms.

Offence was taken in August at the Working Committee's refusal to take action upon the application of Mr. Subhas Bose, the absentee President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for permission to carry on propaganda abroad in the name of the Congress, and the opinion expressed by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly, that Congress should not interfere between the Princes and their people, evoked the criticism that the Working Committee was anxious to placate the States by confining its activities to the Provinces. Dis-satisfaction and despondency increasingly characterised the attitude of Congress in Bengal. The appointment of the Marquesses of Zetland and Linlithgow as Secretary of State and Viceroy-designate aroused little save gloomy and some what captious criticism.

In connection with the Congress Socialist Conference in Calcutta in September, the Nationalist Press admitted that there was in Congress circles a veering round towards a new philosophy, and that while there could never be in Congress itself any open war between the classes and the masses, there were definite indications that majority opinion was inclining towards the Left.

In October considerable discontent was aroused by the action of the All-India Congress Committee at Madras in again shelving the question of the acceptance of office; and relations between the Congress leaders and their Provincial followers were not improved by a further failure on the part of the former to settle the differences between the two factions in the Provincial Congress Committee.

These differences, dating from the personal rivalry between Mr. Subhas Bose and Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, were accentuated by the refusal of a section of the Committee to accept certain of Mr. Bose's suggestion for a settlement, and resulted in an announcement made by the Provincial Secretary in November to the effect that 25 out of the 34 members of the Committee had resigned.

At the same time the poor opinion entertained at Congress Headquarters of the importance of the Province in the sphere of Congress activity was illustrated by the announcement of Mr. Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, to the effect that the Working Committee had no present intention of attempting to interfere in the squabbles in Bengal. A meeting held in Calcutta to settle the quarrel was attended by the members of one faction only, who referred the matter to the arbitration of Mr. Sarat Bose. This gentleman, a brother of Mr. Subhas Bose, had been since 1932 a State Prisoner under Regulation III of 1918. He had been permitted to live under restrictions near Kurseong and he was released at the end of July while in Calcutta on parole. His return was greeted with acclamation as an act of belated justice, and the Calcutta Corporation presented him with an address of welcome. Mr. Bose, however, showed little inclination to plunge into politics, and at the end of the year no further progress had been made towards a compromise, despite the publication of his "award."

The lack of a political programme and the absence of any effective central Congress organisation in Bengal was further illustrated by the want of interest shown throughout the Province in the arrangement made to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Congress on 25th December. Flag hoisting ceremonies, meetings and speeches were the principal items, but these functions were attended by comparatively small crowds, and the principal meeting at Sradhananda Park, Calcutta, attracted not more than 3,000 spectators.

The date of the celebrations coincided with the Muhammadan festival of Id-ul-Fitr, but there was no diminution of the immense congregation of Moslems who participated in the annual religious ceremony upon the Calcutta Maidan. In fact the simultaneous gathering of Congress supporters and Muhammadan worshippers in separate assemblies and frequently in close juxtaposition merely emphasised the widening gulf between the two communities, and the alleged interference of Congress music with Muhammadan prayers resulted in a communal riot at Deshabandhu Park, Calcutta while another was narrowly averted in Wellington Square.

In general the response of Bengal to the Jubilee appeals of Congress leaders, most of whom were assembled in Bombay, must be described as poor; and it indicated the extent to which the Congress has lost popular sympathy in this Province during recent years by the ineffectiveness of its programme and by its persistent refusal to face realities in respect of the political and economic problems of the country.

The report then refers at length to the remarkable interest evinced in Their Imperial Majesties' Silver Jubilee in May.

After dealing at length with the provisions of the India Act, the Report turns to the communal relations. It says relations between the two great communities in the Province showed few signs of improvement during the year, and although there was no major outbreak of communal violence, a succession of minor occurrences demonstrated the readiness of the flame of antagonism to flare up on the slightest provocation. The Report then enumerates certain incidents and continues thus.

In a speech at the St. Andrew's Day dinner in November His Excellency the Governor deplored the extent of communal bitterness, and expressed concern at the manner in which a large section of the Press was encouraging or pandering to the communal spirit. He pointed out the dangers which would ensue if rivalry based upon communal cleavage was exploited as a means of winning those prizes which under a democratic system, are believed to be the reward of the party which can establish itself in the majority; and he appealed to the potential leaders of the various parties in Bengal to face these dangers squarely, and not to countenance any attempts by one community to weaken another by creating or exploiting split in its ranks.

The pertinency of His Excellency's advice was illustrated by the disorderly scenes witnessed in the Calcutta Corporation in December, during a debate on a motion to earmark 25 per cent of Corporation appointments for Muhammadans, and by the subsequent resignation of 15 Muhammadan Councillors and of the Mayor, Mr. Fazlul Huq.

In view of the state of communal relations in Bengal, the election of Mr. Fazlul Huq as the first Muhammadan Mayor of Calcutta was a development of some interest. It was only a split in the Muhammadan vote that prevented the success of a Muhammadan candidate in 1933, and Mr. Huq himself was actually elected by the Sen Gupta-cum-Muhammadan group at the disorderly meeting which disgraced the Corporation in May 1934 and necessitated intervention by the Local Government. The eventual upshot was that Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar held office as Mayor during

the financial year 1934-35 ; but in April 1935 Congress support enabled Mr. Hug to achieve the Mayoral chair.

Ever since the Congress party captured control of it, the Corporation has reacted strongly towards current politics, and its behaviour during the year under review proved no exception to rule. Mr. Hug obtained some prominence by the support which he gave to Trade Union and Workers' Associations, and in July he was elected President of the Bengal Mariners' Union.

In connection with the Reforms, the Corporation declined to favour Government with its views on the delimitation of Calcutta constituencies, on the ground that the new constitution was being "forced upon the country." The Corporation's misplaced sympathy with persons placed under restraint on account of their connection with terrorism found an unfortunate expression in November, when it decided by a majority of 30 votes to 13 to allocate a piece of its property for the erection of a memorial to detenus killed during the disturbance at the Hijli detention camp in 1931. Government decided that such an edifice would tend to excite sympathy with terrorism, and to secure adherents to the terrorist movements ; and the Memorial Committee was accordingly declared an unlawful association under the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908.

On the other hand it is pleasant to be able to record that the Corporation celebrated Their Majesties' Silver Jubilee Number of the "Calcutta Municipal Gazette," while on the occasion of the death of the Royal Highness Princess Victoria in December, it unanimously offered its respected condolences to Their Majesties and the Royal Family, the sponsor of the resolution declaring that the Corporation's loyalty and devotion to the Royal house of England was proverbially deep and unimpeachable.

Patriotism, however, is not enough. In the administration of public affairs it requires to be coupled with efficiency. Suggestions have frequently been made in recent years that the City Fathers of Calcutta would do well to devote less of their time to the expression of contentious political opinions, and more of it to the details of civic administration ; and this criticism was lent particular force during the year under review by a number of incidents which suggested that Congress control of the Corporation has not in fact proved so efficient as its supporters would have the public believe.

In June and July the Corporation Scavengers and Labour Union addressed several letters to Government complaining of the belated payment of wages, and in the latter month deputations from this Union and from the employees of the Palta Waterworks waited upon the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer, to draw their attention to the alleged prevalence of bribery among the Corporation's subordinate staff and to the existence of corruption among its contractors. A strike which would have paralysed the conservancy arrangements of the city was only averted by the payment of arrear salaries and the appointment of an Enquiry Committee.

The failure of the Corporation authorities to provide an adequate supply of drinking water in certain wards during the summer provoked general dissatisfaction and many protests in the Press ; and reports that the water itself was subject to contamination necessitated a discussion of the problems of water-supply and drainage at a conference specially convened by the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Local Self-Government. The Report then dwells at length on certain Corporation irregularities.

While Congress continued to languish and the problems of the new constitution loomed larger and larger upon the political horizon, Bengal continued to wrestle with the demon of terrorism. The year 1935 witnessed no major terrorist outrage in the usually accepted sense of the term, but if the incidents which occurred demonstrated the partial degeneration of terrorism into gangsterism, they nevertheless constituted a reminder that the menace of this movement has merely been curbed and not eliminated.

A series of minor occurrences exemplified the prevalence of the terrorist mentality among the youths of Bengal. In January five young men extorted at the point of the revolver nearly Rs. 300 worth of ornaments from a goldsmith of Dinajpur, and terrorist leaflets were distributed in certain villages in the districts of Chittagong and Murshidabad. Revolutionary posters were affixed to the walls of the College and Zilla School at Pabna ; a revolutionary pamphlet was sent to the Principal of Dacca Islamia Intermediate College and the Additional Superintendent of Police at Dacca, as well as the Superintendent of Police at Patna received letters threatening them



with death. Similar letters were sent in February to a Sub-Inspector of the District Intelligence Branch at Serajganj and to a prosecution witness in a conspiracy case at Hooghly.

During these two months quantities of terrorist literature were recovered as a result of searches carried out at various places in the districts of Midnapore, Rangpur, Dacca, Faridpur and Noakhali. In March two youths attempted to seize at the point of the revolver a mail bag from a train near Faridpur and three other young men armed with revolvers secured several bags of mail from a train between Chapai Nawabganj and Amnura. The Inspector of Police, District Intelligence Branch, Rajshahi, received a threatening letter from Benares, and further finds of revolutionary literature were made in Dacca and Midnapore districts.

In April, a mail runner in the district of Jessore was attacked by three 'bhadralock' youths, who robbed him of the bags which he was carrying; while in May three young men snatched a bag of mail from a runner in Faridpur district. It is satisfactory to note that two of the latter were chased and captured by local Muhammadan cultivators. In the same month a revolver and some cartridges were stolen from an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police. Revolutionary leaflets entitled "Be ready with your pistol" appeared in certain villages of Pabna district in May; the District Magistrate of Howrah received a letter threatening him with death if the Silver Jubilee celebrations were not stopped; and information was obtained of a meditated attempt upon the life of the District Magistrate of Murshidabad.

On June 4th a youth, who was apparently thought to be a Police spy, was stabbed to death in Faridpur district, while on June 15th the Sub-Inspector of Police in charge of Goalundo Ghat thana in the same district was murdered with a 'dao' by a detenu domiciled in the locality, who was arrested on the spot.

During the same month guns were stolen in Jessore and Chittagong districts, and threatening letters were sent to the District Magistrate of Dacca and to an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police in Birbhum; while revolutionary leaflets appeared again in Chittagong, and searches revealed the presence of terrorist literature in the districts of Rajshahi, Faridpur and Noakhali.

On July 3rd a domiciled detenu was killed with knives in broad daylight near Government House at Dacca by two political suspects, who seemed to be under the impression that he was giving information to the Police. One was chased and caught by passers-by, and the other was captured shortly afterwards. Later in the same month leaflets exciting local students to kill the District Intelligence Branch Officer were found at the Zilla School at Pabna, and in August further leaflets entitled "Long live revolution" were discovered in the same institution as well as in the Technical School.

On August 2nd a revolver and 25 rounds of ammunition were stolen from the house of a European at Barrackpore. A few days later a terrorist poster appeared upon the noticeboard of the High English School at Rajitpur in Mymensingh district. On September 1st two leaflets, containing an impassioned and bloodthirsty appeal for revolution, and addressed respectively to students and to members of Anti-Terrorist Associations, were distributed in Chittagong by the "Burya Communist Party", while on September 3rd revolutionary posters appeared upon the gates of the Narail College, Jessore district, on the occasion of the visit of the Divisional Commissioner.

On the 9th September terrorist prisoners in the Midnapore Central Jail severely assaulted a warder, and the District Magistrate's enquiry established the fact that their behaviour was premeditated and unprovoked. It is satisfactory to record that nine of them were subsequently convicted. During the same month further threatening letters were received by the District Magistrate of Dacca while searches in Chittagong district in November brought to light a quantity of dynamite and ammunition.

The recovery of arms and ammunition, and the capture of a number of absconders and suspects, testified on the one hand to the continued existence of terrorist organisations and on the other to the vigilance and courage of the Police. In January an important absconder of the Anusilan Party was arrested with incriminating documents in the 24 Parganas district; and Purnananda Das Gupta with Sitanath De and Niranjan Ghosal had escaped from the Alipore Central Jail during the trial of the Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case in July, 1934, was arrested with terrorists at Titagarh, and an automatic pistol, ammunition, revolutionary literature, chemicals and explosive formulæ were recovered at the same time. In the same month a muzzle-loading pistol was seized in Hooghly, a 6-chambered revolver was recovered by a chaukidar from a tank in the same district, and spare parts of fire-arms were

found at Natore; while a Chittagong Band Case absconder was arrested at Gunning as a result of the seizure of a 'bhadralok', constable.

In February two guns and other weapons were seized from a house in Mymensingh district. In March a revolver and an automatic pistol were recovered in Faridpur, two guns were found in each of the districts of Jessore and Bakarganj, a country-made pistol and some cartridges were seized in Midnapore, a stolen gun was traced in Mymensingh, and some ammunition was located in Pabna. The absconder Nirajan Ghosal, mentioned above, was arrested in April; and in the same month some ammunition was discovered in Mymensingh, a 6-chambered revolver was found upon the person of a passenger in a train at Assamul, and 40 live and 25 fired cartridges were recovered from a tank in Dinajpur district. In May 3 revolvers, a gun, and 21 cartridges were seized in Dinajpur, and ammunition was discovered in the districts of Bankura and Faridpur.

On 5th June the premises of the Rajshahi City Bank were searched and some cartridges and documents containing formulae for the preparation of T. N. T. and cordite were seized. The month of June saw also the recovery of a revolver, some cartridges and a detective warrant, which had been stolen from an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police; while a single-barrelled rifle and some cartridges were secured in Malda, a revolver and some cartridges in Khulna, and a gun in Bakarganj.

In July an absconder was arrested in Chittagong; a pistol of Belgian make was recovered in Mymensingh; and a 5-chambered revolver was seized at Assamul railway station from a passenger in the Bombay mail, who escaped while being interrogated, jumped from the platform, and was out to pieces by a passing train. On August 3rd a 6-chambered revolver and 3 cartridges were found in the pocket of a youth at Tollyganj; on August 4th 3 bombs, some chemicals, and some explosive formulae were seized at Dacca, and a gun was recovered in Mymensingh; while on August 17th a regular battery of firearms, comprising a revolver, a pistol three guns and 32 rounds of ammunition, was discovered at Dinajpur.

In the latter part of August an important absconder was arrested in Pabna district and in September a revolver and a muzzle-loading pistol were seized in Noakhali. At the beginning of October another absconder was secured in Dinajpur, and two important arrests were effected in Chittagong. In November a process-server in the 24 Parganas district recovered a revolver while attaching some property in a house, and another revolver was seized from a house in Faridpur district.

The extent of terrorist conspiracies for the secretion of arms and the commission of outrages and the measure of Government's success in combating them, were further indicated by the large number of cases disposed of by Special Courts in the course of the year. In February Dhanesh Bhattacharji, a detainee who escaped from the Bankura Lepet Asylum and was captured while in possession of a loaded revolver, was convicted by a Special Tribunal at Dacca. In the same month a Special Tribunal sitting at Dinajpur disposed of three connected terrorist dacoity cases, as a result of which 8 persons received sentences ranging from 10 to 4 years' rigorous imprisonment.

On 1st May the Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, which had been proceeding so many months before a Special Tribunal at Alipore, ended in the conviction of no less than 35 persons in respect of offences of a terrorist and revolutionary character. Six were sentenced to transportation for life, and the rest to varying terms of imprisonment. In July the detainee who murdered the Sub-Inspector of Police at Goalundo was sentenced to death by a Special Tribunal at Faridpur, and in September the two youths who stabbed a detainee at Dacca were likewise sentenced to death by a Special Tribunal sitting in that city. The latter sentence was subsequently reduced by the High Court to transportation for life.

At the close of the year a Special Tribunal at Alipore was engaged in trying 31 persons including a woman, in connection with the recoveries of arms consequent upon the arrest of Purnananda Das Gupta in January. Magistrates vested with special powers under the Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages Act disposed of many somewhat similar cases, some of which are worth recording. Four youths were convicted in an Arms Act case at Rajshahi in January, two of whom, aged 15, pleaded guilty to the charge and were sent to the Borstal School at Bankura.

In a Conspiracy Case at Rangpur in February, thirteen persons received sentences ranging from 7 years' rigorous imprisonment to a fine of Rs. 50 and in March two young men were convicted of somewhat similar offences in the Garbetta Conspiracy Case at Bankura two 'bhadralok' youths were convicted of mail robbery, and in April a third was sentenced at Bishnupur to 5 years' rigorous imprisonment for

possessing cartridges and materials for the repair of revolvers. The persons were convicted at Dacca for harbouring the absconder Dhaneek Bhattacharji, and in Birbhum seven persons were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for conspiracy to commit robbery and dacoity. In the Gaibandha Arms Conspiracy Case in May a further batch of seven youths was convicted, while in the same month there was a conviction in Dinajpur for possession of letters inciting to violence, and another in Bakarganj for the possession of explosives. At Hooghly in a case of dacoity with double murder, eight persons received sentences ranging downwards from 7 years' rigorous imprisonment, and in August two youths were convicted in Nadia district for the unlawful possession of a revolver. A number of similar cases were disposed of during the remaining months of the year: and it is to be hoped that the sentences imposed by these Courts will go some way towards diminishing the number of criminal conspiracies and crimes of violence.

The policy adopted in 1932, of deporting terrorist convicts to the Andamans, was continued during 1935, and in the course of the year 91 convicts of the type were despatched to Port Blair from Bengal. Congress leaders continued to evince sympathy for these deportees, and in April Mr. Mohanlal Saxena, a member of the Congress group in the Legislative assembly, applied for permission to visit the Andamans. As his ostensible object was to enquire into the "alleged hardships" of the terrorist convicts in the Cellular Jail, it was perhaps hardly surprising that his request was refused by the Government of India.

In May the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Narayanaswami Chetty, Member of the Council of State, who had behind him 25 years of interest in prison reform, paid a private visit to the Islands, and on his return published two letters to Government commending favourably upon the conditions in which he found the terrorist convicts living. In August a Congress member tabled a resolution in the Bengal Legislative Council recommending the retransfer of all such prisoners from the Andamans to Bengal. Want of time prevented discussion on this motion, but it afforded a regrettable example of the concern felt in certain quarters for persons convicted of terrorist crimes.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the Andamans have never been actually closed down as a penal settlement, and that in addition to terrorists, about 5,000 ordinary convicts are detained at Port Blair. The object of sending convicted terrorists to the place is to prevent them forming in Bengal the nucleus of plots and conspiracies, to reduce the chances of their escape, and to remove the source of danger to the discipline and security of Bengal Jails; and in view of these facts it is regrettable that sympathy for this small band of dangerous criminals should continue to be shown by Congress organizations.

Throughout the year efforts of Government and its officers continued to be directed not merely to the breaking up of terrorist conspiracies, but also towards the eradication of the terrorist mentality in affected areas of the Province. The Military Intelligence Officers, who with the status of Superintendents of Police are assisting the civil administration have done most valuable work in this direction in the districts of Midnapore, Chittagong, Tipperah, Noakhali, Faridpur, Dacca, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Rajshahi and Murshidabad. Encouragement was given to the formation of local Anti-Terrorist Committees affiliated to the All-Bengal Anti-Terrorist Association, and in addition to those already formed a number of such committees were organized in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Jessore, and Faridpur districts.

Referring to the employment of troops the report says:—There can be little question that the presence of these military forces in the districts most affected by terrorism not merely provided assistance to the civil authorities, but also gave encouragement to the loyal element in the population and acted as a partial deterrent in respect of terrorist plotting and propaganda.

Preventive detention under the provisions of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act continued, however, during the year to be the principal method employed to guard against the commission of terrorist outrages; and the detention camps at Buxar and Hijli, the two camps at Burhampore, and the camp at Duoli in Ajmere Merwara all remained in commission. At the close of the year out of a total of 3,418 persons dealt with under the Act, 194 had been released before the expiration of two months, 472 had been released unconditionally or upon terms, 214 were in home domicile, 538 in village domicile, 35 had been extorted from Bengal, 1,517 were detained in jails and camps, 21 had died. 21 were untraced, the orders against

2 had been allowed to lapse, and 104 had been convicted or were awaiting trial in respect of specific offences.

Despite the insistence of its leaders that Congress, being pledged to non-violence, could have no connection with or interest in terrorism, the All India Congress Committee felt it incumbent upon itself to champion the cause of the Bengal detainees. In February questions were asked in the Legislative Assembly regarding the number of persons detained in jails and camps under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, while articles appeared in the Congress Press suggesting that the reduction in the number of terrorist outrages should be followed by a revision of Government's policy in respect of detention without trial, and that the occasion of the Silver Jubilee should be signalled by a general release of detainees.

It was arranged in April that May 19th should be celebrated throughout India as "Detenu Day" and a committee of Congress Members of the Legislative Assembly, with Mr. Mohanlal Saxena, as its Chairman, was appointed "to enquire and report upon the administration of repressive laws" in this Province. Whatever may have happened in other parts of India, the celebration of "Detenu Day" fell completely flat in Bengal. Recognizing the dangers inherent in an agitation of this nature, Government decided that any publicity given to the cause of persons detained because of their connection with terrorists, a connection established in each case after an independent and most careful examination of the fact, must inevitably stimulate and encourage the supporters of terrorism. It was felt, also, that any widely advertised expression of sympathy with the detainees, however genuine might be the feelings by which it was prompted, must react unfavourably upon the efforts being made to eradicate the disease of terrorism from the body politic. Accordingly an order was issued on 17th May under section 2A, Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931, for bidding the publication of any information either regarding the observance of "Detenu Day" or regarding other similar attempts to excite sympathy for those detained under the Bengal State Prisoners Regulations of 1918 and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1930. On the same date a communique explaining the reasons for the order was issued to the Press.

The effect of this action was immediate; and although the holding of meetings had not been prohibited, the actual celebrations on May 19th were a complete fiasco throughout the Province. The principal gathering arranged at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, was poorly attended: Mr. Fazlul Haq, the Mayor, who was expected to preside, had urgent business at Krishnagar; the collections made were insignificant; and the meeting itself degenerated into a Communist rally, which broke up in confusion at the appearance of the Police. The Nationalist Press waxed indignant over the "high-handed" behaviour of Government in this connection, and indulged in the puerile gesture of suspending publication on May 21st by way of protest. The province, however, remained quite unexcited by these antics, and the sponsors of "Detenu Day" can look back upon it with little save discomfiture and mortification.

Mr. Saxena's Committee met with even less success. On April 22nd it issued a lengthy questionnaire to various organisations and persons in Bengal, asking for information concerning the administration of "repressive" laws. The very wording of this circular showed that the Committee had not approached the subject matter of the enquiry with an open mind. Correspondents were asked, among other questions, to suggest methods of alleviating "the present hardship of detainees and their families" to describe the "inconvenience and harassment caused by searches", to enumerate any "humiliating orders requiring individuals to report at police-stations", and to "give instances of repression and hardship, if any, caused to the public" as a result of "Military marches."

The replies elicited would appear to have been inadequate and unsatisfactory, for the Committee decided to explore other avenues. On 13th June Mr. Saxena wrote to the Government of Bengal, inviting it to "place its case" before the Committee, which would welcome its co-operation. He was informed in reply that Government would not countenance proceedings which to all appearances were prompted by a spirit of antagonism, not to terrorism, but to itself. Mr. Saxena expressed surprise at this answer and a hope that it was not final. He was advised that his hopes were vain, and was permitted to publish the correspondence which had passed between himself and the Chief Secretary.

Having done so, he arrived almost alone in Calcutta on 7th July. His reception was poor, and the interest displayed in his enquiry was lukewarm. He arranged to commence his tour by a visit to Tipperah, but on reaching Chandpur on 12th July, he was served with an order prohibiting him from entering the district. He

thereupon returned to Calcutta, and after ascertaining that he would not be permitted to visit certain other districts, he left Bengal on 14th July. The refusal of the Government of Bengal to submit its case to the scrutiny of a self-constituted Committee of Congress parliamentarians, not appointed by the Legislative Assembly and lacking any constitutional authority, needs no justification and the suggestion that Government should have recognized the right of a political party to investigate and sit in judgment upon official policy, was remarkable, not merely for its effrontery, but also for its curious ignorance of the first principles of constitutional practice.

While Congress politicians were indulging in these misguided efforts to secure a general release of all detenus and to excite sympathy on their behalf, irrespective of the merits or demerits of individuals, and cheerfully oblivious of the public danger involved by the proposal to flood the Province with potential anarchists, Government began to develop a policy calculated to wean the majority of those detained from their mistaken leanings towards terrorism and to convert them into useful members of the State.

The general tone of Press during the year was similar to that of 1934, and although the improvement noticed in last year's Report was maintained and there was a considerable hardening of opinion against terrorism, the attitude of hostility towards Government still persisted in a considerable degree. At the beginning of the year there was strong criticism of the Report of the Joint Select Committee on the India Bill, and the Bill itself came in for steady attack while passing through Parliament. The financial proposals of the Bengal Government were also condemned on the ground that new taxation could not be justified, and while the Development Bill was generally welcomed, it was suggested that the Government of India's grant of money for rural reconstruction only resulted from the activities of Mr. Gandhi's Village Industries Association.

#### COMMUNAL OUTLOOK

The reprieve granted to one of the would be assassins of his Excellency the Governor was welcomed with the suggestion that it would do more to check terrorism than any number of repressive laws; but the action taken by Government against various communal associations in Calcutta roused considerable hostile comment. Sarcastic reference were made in April to the publication by the 'Morning Post' of a confidential circular of the Bengal I. C. S. Association.

The unfortunate pandering of the Press to communal antagonism has already been referred to, and it was particularly noticeable in connection with the firing at Karachi and the rioting at Ferozabad. The attitude of the Nationalist newspapers towards the Silver Jubilee celebrations in May cannot be described as anything more than lukewarm, and although some of them published Jubilee issues and royal greetings, there was a tendency to indulge in somewhat undignified criticism of the various arrangements that were made. The demand of security from the newspaper 'Bande Mataram' as a result of a scurrilous writing against His Majesty, even evoked some sympathy, and comments were made upon the risks to which the Press was exposed under the present law.

It is satisfactory to note that 'Bande Mataram' subsequently repudiated the sentiments expressed in the offending article, and later wrote in appreciation of the place occupied by His Majesty in the constitution. Despite considerable interest and general appeals for funds in connection with the Quetta earthquake disaster, there was much grumbling over the restrictions imposed upon the entry of volunteers into the devastated area and the decision to refuse admission to non-officials was criticised as likely to create public suspicion and resentment. The interest aroused by the passage of the India Bill through the House of Lords was soon overshadowed by the communal feelings excited by the Shahidganj mosque dispute at Lahore; and bitter opposition was expressed against the renewal of the Public Security Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The debates in the Legislative Assembly over the latter measure were fully reported and its certification by His Excellency the Viceroy was viewed with marked disfavour.

Much interest was evinced in the distress caused by the Damodar floods, and there was occasional appreciations of official relief measures. With the placing of the Government of India Act upon the statute book, interest in home politics centred on the question of the acceptance of office under the new constitution, and a considerable volume of opinion in unexpected quarters appeared to favour the working of the Reforms.

## SYMPATHY FOR ABYSSINIA

The war in Abyssinia aroused much genuine sympathy for the Emperor Haile Selassie and his people, but it was freely suggested that the part played by Great Britain, in support of the League of Nations and in the enforcement of Sanctions against Italy, was dictated by considerations of selfish imperialism and not by philanthropic motives. There was a general tendency to decry the efforts of the League, but on the other hand the Franco-British proposals for a settlement of the dispute were severely censured and the subsequent resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare, the Foreign Secretary, was declared to have been inevitable.

At the close of the year the main topics of discussion were the communal dispute in the Calcutta Corporation, the question of acceptance of office by the Congress under the new constitution, the celebration of the Congress Golden Jubilee and the impending financial inquiry by Sir Otto Niemeyer; and the B ngal Press was unanimous in its support of His Excellency the Governor's appeal for financial justice to Bengal in the next settlement between the Centre and the Provinces.

During the year 47 warnings were conveyed to newspapers by the Press Officer and security was demanded from four presses and five papers, while the securities of one press and one newspaper were forfeited.

## The B. & O. Administration Report

The following extracts are taken from the Report for the year 1935 :—

The year 1935 was, generally speaking, one of suspended political activity. The previous year had closed with the almost simultaneous Congress success in the Legislative Assembly elections in November and the publication of the Joint Select Committee's Report; but the Congress found little cause for solace in the events of the year under review, whether in the matter of capturing the votes of the people, or of influencing the course of the New Reforms legislation.

That the extreme Congress programme found little support among the people is shown by the wide-spread apathy evinced by the public on the usual "Independence Day" celebrations staged by the Congress on January 26th. The lack of public interest on January 26th, contrasted vividly with the ripples of enthusiasm on December 28th, the day of the Congress Golden "Jubilee," when the Congress, in co-operation with most parties, managed, on a non-party basis successfully to imitate, at many important centres of the province, some features of His Majesty's Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the preceding May. The other parties made it clear that they were honouring by the participation the aspirations of India to autonomy and were in no way endorsing the disloyal creed of the present Congress. The Hindu Mahasabha indeed felt so naturally the evasive attitude of the Congress towards the Communal Award that at their annual session at Poona, during Christmas week, they not only refused to felicitate the Congress on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee but also decided to contest the elections under the new constitution in opposition of the Congress.

## ENROLMENT OF MEMBERS

Apart from elections and jubiliations there was little in the activities of the official Congress party worthy of record. The first-half of the year was spent by Congressmen in recruiting members under the new Congress constitution, but in spite of postponements of the final date for recruitment, and the fact that Babu Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, was a native of this province, the results, even according to a resolution passed by the Provincial Congress Working Committee on April 17th, was disappointing. Of the provincial quota of one hundred thousand members, the Congress in Bihar and Orissa managed to enrol only some seventy-eight thousand. Still it afforded considerable consolation in Bihar Congress circles to know that of all the provinces of India, Bihar and Orissa stood first in the matter of enrolment of Congress members.

The activities within the province of the All-India Village Industries Association, about which much had been promised earlier in the year, consisted in expensive

experiments at gur-making from the toddy palm, in the opening of a night school here or a village library there, or a few shops here and there selling articles somewhat above the market rate. In fact, most Congressmen with their desire to see the industrialization of India on modern lines progress as rapidly as possible, were, from the start, half-hearted about a matter to which they were prepared to pay lip-service in deference to the dreams of Mr. Gandhi. Moreover, the ban by Mr. Gandhi on workers of the Village Industries Association actively participating in political work effectively deprived the scheme of its political attraction.

#### SOCIALIST DISCONTENT

The real interest in Congress politics however, in this province as elsewhere, was not so much the activity of the Village Industries Association or the Golden Jubilee Celebration as the increasing dissension within the party, owing to the growing impatience of its Socialist wing with the policy of Congress officialdom. Already in April, at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Jubbulpore, the Congress President found some difficulty in keeping the Socialist members under control. In May, matters were precipitated by the declaration of Mr. Satyamurti M. E. A., Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Party and President of the Madras (Tamil) Congress Committee, in favour of acceptance of office under the new constitution.

This declaration took Congress orthodoxy by surprise and caused a marked stir in political circles in the country. The Satyamurti group was loud in favour of office and the Socialist group was as vociferous against; while Congress officialdom observed a discreet silence. The country, however, at once demanded to know the mind of the Congress on this important question, but was told by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha in July to wait for an answer.

This procrastination was endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee at its meeting in Madras in October and the matter was left over to the open session of the Congress at Lucknow in April 1936, neither the Working Committee, nor the All-India Committee, daring to give a lead to a matter in which opinion within the Congress was so sharply divided as to promise a split whatever the decision.

#### KISHAN SABHA ACTIVITIES

While Congressmen in Orissa seemed united in their determination to work the new constitution in Bihar the cleavage between Congress officialdom and the Socialist wing was accentuated by the activities of the Kisan Sabha and their leader Swami Sahajanand. Ostensibly an organization to promote the welfare of the tenantry, the Kisan Sabha, under the inspiration of their Socialist allies, became increasingly a body aiming at the complete elimination of the ownership of property in land. Throughout the year the Swami and his followers toured the districts in North and South Bihar, addressing meetings, where they enlarged upon the misdeeds of the landlords and the iniquity of the Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Act which came into force in June.

Naturally the Swami and his friends were considerably annoyed when Pandit Shiva Shankar Jha and Babu Gursahai Lal, who had been the tenants' representatives in the Legislative Council during the passage of the Bill, toured the same districts, with the active good-will of the local Government, informing large assemblies of eager tenants of the benefits secured to them by the Act. In a Presidential speech at Hajipur, in November, the Swami appears to have over-reached himself for he was openly attacked by the Congress vernacular organ, the Navashakti of Patna for his views expressed there. This, however, did not deter the Swami, who succeeded, in December, in organizing a boycott of the Bihta Sugar Mill by the local sugarcane growers.

#### INDIA BILL REACTION

In the wider constitutional sphere the debates in Parliament on the India Bill were followed with the closest interest in the province as elsewhere. There was widespread disappointment at the omission of any reference to Dominion Status in the Bill itself, which the subsequent explanatory statements of responsible Ministers in Parliament and the assurance that His Majesty's Government will stand by the Viceroy of India's famous pronouncement of 1929 did not entirely dispel. Many of the amendments carried during the progress of the Bill were subjected to hostile criticisms in the Press.

There was one amendment, however, which was universally applauded, namely the amendment of the House of Lords substituting direct election to the Upper

Chamber of the Federal Legislature for indirect election. In August, the Royal assent to the Government of India Act was the signal for further conventional criticism of the new constitution, which the leading Congress organ of the province described as "a monstrous infliction" and "an unparalleled affront".

That this ferocity of language did not represent its real views, however, and still less the views of the public, is proved by the intense interest which it constantly betrayed in the work of the Reforms Department. Indeed all sections of opinion showed the keenest interest in the impending advent of the new constitution, which was reflected in the debates of the Legislative Council and the reception, given in October to the Delimitation Committee, in whose Chairman, Sir Laurie Hammond, the province recalled with satisfaction, one of its distinguished former public servants.

Another outstanding event which had wide reactions in the province was the Italo-Abyssinian war. The course of the war and the attitude towards it of the League of Nations, and of Great Britain in particular, were watched with the closest interest. Like the rest of India the sympathies of Bihar and Orissa were entirely with Abyssinia; and the attempts of the Italian community in Calcutta to arouse sympathy for Italy, by the issue of letters and communiques to the Press, and the distribution, in September and October, of pamphlets within the province fell flat.

### COMMUNAL RELATIONS

The year 1935 saw a steady deterioration in communal relations chiefly owing to repercussions among Moslems of the events in other provinces and the correspondingly increased activity of the Hindu religious organisations. The year began in Bihar with fair prospects, which were soon dimmed in February by the failure at Delhi of the Rajendra Prasad-Jinnah talks to effect any agreed communal settlement. The firing on a frenzied Moslem mob at Karachi on the 19th March agitated the Moslem mind all over India and induced a desire for martyrdom that was not calculated to make the already strained relations with the major community any easier. Although the Bakr-Id in March passed off without serious trouble, rioting was narrowly averted at Kharagpur, Tegra and Sheikhpura in Monghyr district, while the sacrilegious despolement, with a slaughtered calf's head, of a Devasthan outside Phenbaha in Champaran, was to bear its fruit of death five months later.

### MUHARRAM CLASHES

In April, the 7th day of Muharram happened to coincide with the Ram Navami, which was celebrated with even larger Mahabir Jhanda processions than usual; a class of procession which throughout its few years' vogue has tended intensely to annoy Moslems who regard it as a provocative substitute for their Muharram procession, in which both communities used to join in happier years. The result was that the police and the magistracy almost everywhere had an anxious time; while several clashes between the communities took place at Hazaribagh and Ranchi. Although many persons, including policemen were injured at both these places, previously the envy of the province for their lack of communal trouble no one was actually killed.

The atrocities of the communal riots at Ferozabad in the Agra District, of the United Provinces, in April, in which, eleven Hindus were burnt to death in a barricaded house, sent a thrill of horror throughout the country, and aroused Hindu feeling as intensely as Moslem feelings had been aroused in March by the Karachi tragedy. Although the barbarities were condemned by all right-minded persons including several Moslem leaders, the incident left an ugly impression that kept communal ill-feeling vigorously alive throughout May.

In June there was a somewhat unexpected outburst of Moslem feeling in Bihar as elsewhere, against clause 304 of the Government of India Bill, then before the House of Commons, which provided for future amendments in the method of election to the Legislatures. A statement issued by the Government of India with the authority of the Secretary of State on July 3rd did much to allay Moslem apprehensions that the Communal Award might be altered without consulting the minorities, and the corresponding section 308 of the Act, as passed, has given satisfaction to all but extreme Moslem opinion. Later in July the communal situation in the Punjab over the Sahidganj affair necessitated the despatch of the Gurkha Military Police from Ranchi to Lahore.

In August the embitterment of communal relations brought tragedy in our province. On the 4th of the month, very large crowds of armed Hindus, who had not forgotten the despolement of their Devasthan some five months before, assembled at Phenbaha in Champaran ostensibly for a Mahabir Jhanda procession, and broke



the terms of a compromise regarding the road of procession arrived at with the Moslems only two days previously. They then deded the repeated orders of the Sadar Subdivisional Officer to disperse, attempted to invade the Moslem Idgah, and compelled the Subdivisional Officer to order the armed police to open fire, in the course of which 30 rounds were fired resulting in the death of six men and in injuries to seven more.

There were attempts in certain quarters to make communal and political capital out of the tragedy, but the prompt issue of two communiques by Government, the first based on a telegraphic report and the second on fuller material, including the recorded evidence of several non-official Hindu eye-witnesses fully enlightened the public regarding the occurrence. Although the Legislative Council met at Ranchi shortly after, in the same month, no attempt was made to censure the action of Government or its officers whether by a resolution or by a adjournment motion.

Again, on the 27th October there was a serious Hindu-Moslem clash over the old question of processions and music before mosques. This time the scene was at Jamalpur in Monghyr district where an apparently inoffensive Moslem stranger was killed in the fracas.

But, although the scene may shift, the features in most of these clashes are much the same; and there is little prospect of permanent harmony unless both the great communities exercise forbearance and mutual toleration. A feature of the year symptomatic of the tension between the two communities was the number of Mahabir Jhanda processions taken out, apparently at all seasons of the year, and increasingly in areas where no one found it a necessary part of his religion so to proceed before.

It is a significant commentary on communal realations that on the day of the Phenara firing, which was not the date of any major festival, no less than six Magistrates in Champaran alone had to leave their ordinary work and go on deputation, with police forces, to various places in the district, in order to keep the communities apart on the occasion of these Mahabir Jhanda demonstrations. The very heavy burden on the administration need not be emphasised, but unless the two great communities take the situation in hand in good time, the increased expenditure, that may become necessary in future in order to maintain law and order in the province, may make the administration, in return, a burden on the people.

In addition to Hindu-Moslem tension there was some local friction, erupting in criminal cases between Christians and Hindus, among the aboriginals of Chota Nagpur, owing to resentment at intensified Hindu missionary activity, chiefly in Palamanu district.

Within the Hindu community itself although the declared intention of Dr. Ambedkar, in October, to lead the depressed classes out of the Hindu fold, caused a considerable stir in orthodox circles, it does not seem to have had effect on the depressed classes in this province.

The year saw a marked increase in crime. The figure of reported cases in 1935 as compared with the triennial average for the three preceding years are murder 362 cases against 355, dacoity 475 cases against 415, robbery 249 cases against 205, burglary 16,320 against 15,482, theft 9,664 against 9,260, cattle theft 843 cases against 593 and riot 780 against 762. The increase in dacoity is not as serious as the figures suggest since the figures for the 2nd quarter are swollen by 28 cases in Saran which were merely revivals of suppressed or minimized cases of previous years.

It is difficult to account for the increase in crime, but possibly the explanation be found in the fact that the previous three years' period was a period of slump in crime after the boom in crime during the Civil disobedience era. Perhaps insistence on better reporting and the pre-occupation of the policy, in some districts, with communal trouble were also responsible for the increase in the figures. It is interesting to note that the no-police tract in the Santhal Parganas likewise recorded an increase, attributed to the economic depression.

To cope with the problem there was an energetic drive of bad livelihood cases of which no less than 919 cases against 1,605 persons came before the courts in the course of the year. In Champaran and Purnea where there had been successful prosecutions under sections 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code there was a sharp increase in dacoity, vanishing to none in the 3rd quarter in Champaran. Purnea also greatly benefited from the restriction under the Criminal Tribes Act, of 375 notorious North Bhagalpur criminals.

A disquieting feature was the continued occurrence of railway obstruction cases. There were 47 such cases during the year. Although none of these cases had fatal results, the persistence of a mentality among certain persons, who would derail trains by tampering with the line or signals, in order to express their grievance against society, is a source of ever-present danger to the public.

Terrorist activity during the year was not inconsiderable. On April 3rd a bomb exploded in a Sikh Gurdwara in Patna city. The occurrence apparently had no political significance. In June, four youths who had been preparing to commit a political dacoity in the Jharria Coalfields, were arrested by the police. One confessed and the other three were sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment.

On the sixth of July, while six youths belonging to the Madhubani revolutionary party were manufacturing bombs at Gandhwar in the Madhubani subdivision of Darbhanga district, one bomb accidentally exploded killing one of them outright and injuring the others severely. One of the five survivors turned approver and the other four alleged survivors were being tried by the Court of Sessions at the end of the year.

Again, at the end of December, a train on the Patna-Islampur Light Railway ran over and exploded a bomb, which had evidently been placed on the line with sinister intent. No one was hurt and the event probably had no political complexion.

Nine more persons were interned and three (including an arms smuggler) were externed under the Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Act during the course of the year. This Act which was due to expire in March '36, proved a most effective weapon in dealing with terrorism and communism and the necessity was felt of the re-enactment of certain sections as a permanent measure. Just after the close of the year the Legislative Council extended the operation of these sections for five years more.

Of the papers that began publication during the course of the year mention may be made of the 'Sentinel', an English weekly published at Ranchi since March, the 'Itiqlal', an Urdu twice-weekly of Patna, published since November, and the Hindi 'Janak' a daily of Patna that appeared at the end of the year.

Security under the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act was demanded only from the 'Jamhoor', a Urdu weekly of Patna, for an article containing a thinly-veiled incitement to murder; at the time of declaration from the 'Itiqlal'; and from the 'Chandrakala Press' at Hazaribagh. The 'Jamhoor' ceased publication on demand of security. The securities deposited by the 'Yogi' and the 'Navashakti' in the course of the previous year remained intact at the end of the year.

As a mark of protest against the certification by the Governor-General, in September, of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, which the Assembly had refused to consider, certain papers withheld publication for a day.

Nevertheless the press as a whole, even those papers which are, from policy, automatically hostile to Government, offered every facility to the Publicity Officer in the publication of Government material; and, as the year advanced, all but the most extreme papers evinced an increasing readiness to try to understand the Government point of view.

The year was fairly free of industrial disputes. The strikes that occurred were of a minor nature and hardly merit detailed record.

There was an increasing disposition among employers to consider sympathetically the legitimate grievances of workers. Thus the India General Navigation Company met to a great extent the demands of the workers at the Digha workshop, who struck work for a few days in December, owing to the discharge of 78 of their number; and the action, in July, of the Tata Iron and Steel Company in granting a bonus of one month's pay to all their employees at an estimated expenditure of about Rs. 10 lakhs had a settling effect among the workers in one of the most important labour areas of the province.

There was some increase in Trade Union activity, in Monghyr and Jamalpur, as elsewhere, under the inspiration of the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Socialist Party; but, in places, the workers resented the attempts of the Socialist Party to use them for political ends. On the other hand, the accredited leaders of the workers took a keen interest in the position of Labour under the New Constitution, and the Metal Workers Union of Jamshedpur in co-operation with unions from the coalfields appeared before the Hammond Committee at Ranchi in October to argue the Trade Union point of view. In the same month the Provincial Congress Committee at its meeting at Patna showed some interest in labour matters and appointed Mr. Abdul Bari to investigate the labour problem throughout the province, while Babu Rajendra Prasad himself proceeded straight from the Patna

meeting to Jamshepur in order to try to push up some agreement between the Metal Workers Union, which wished to keep aloof from politics, and its moribund rival, the Labour Association, with its distinct Congress sympathies. At the end of the year the release, on the 27th November, of Manek Bomi from the Seraila Jail evoked considerable enthusiasm among workmen in the Jamshepur area.

The latest of the monsoon in setting in and its early departure would suggest at first sight a year of drought rather than of flood. But the unevenness with which

heavy rain fell in Orissa, Nagpur and South Bihar causing floods in Gaya and Patna districts. The Pampan with its tributaries the Morar and the Dardha inundated the countryside. The 'bhadai' crop was very seriously damaged in and around the Jehanabad subdivision of the Gaya district. The flood interrupted railway traffic on the Grand Chord line for about two days, a bridge at Akbarpur at the southern extremity of the Dohri-Rohates Light Railway and another on the Patna-Islampur Light Railway were carried away; while the Patna-Bhanchi road was badly breached at several places. An alarming feature of the flood was the threat to Patna City itself where an iron shutter in a culvert near Gulkarbagh station was carried away overnight. The efforts of the staff of the Public Works Department and the District Board saved the city from serious damage. On the 23rd August the rise in the Lakhandegri and other small rivers breached the ring-embankment that surrounds Sitamarhi since the earthquake, and flooded the town. Fortunately the water subsided on the 25th. In the Bhagalpur district the Kosi in flood, as was fully expected, washed away the embankment put up to protect Madhipara, and also interrupted the train service in Supaul.

In September the unfortunate Tirhut Division once more suffered the worst natural calamity of the year in the province. Within a week of the 15th September twenty-five inches and more of rain deluged the greater part of the Division. This excessive rainfall coincided with high flood in the Bur Gandak in Munshargarh and Darbhanga districts. Therefore, while parts of Champaran and Saran also suffered badly, the damage was greatest in the Sitamarhi and Sadar subdivisions of Munshargarh and in the Sadar and Samastipur subdivisions of Darbhanga district. Some idea of the floods can be gathered from the fact that the roads, which, of course, were badly breached in all the districts, were at some places as much as ten feet under water. The loss of life from drowning was insignificant, thanks to the prompt measures of relief undertaken by the officers of Government and local bodies, and also by non-official organisations but several persons lost their lives by the collapse of mud walls, and many thousands of mud houses and thousands of maunds grain were badly damaged in the affected areas.

To cope with the situation caused by the floods, Government gave whatever relief was necessary. For the August floods, Government had given Rs. 5,000 for the relief of distress in the Gaya and Patna districts and Rs. 6,000 for relief in Tirhut. The September floods necessitated relief on a more extensive scale. About a lakh of rupees was placed at the disposal of the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division for gratuitous relief in the form of grants for house-building, or, for 'rabi' seeds, to compensate the poorer classes for the extensive damage to houses and crops that the flood had caused. In addition a sum of Rs. 96,000 was allotted to the four districts of the Tirhut Division for the purpose of 'taacavi' loans and the Collectors in these districts were also authorized by Government to stay certificate cases at their discretion.

There was, on the whole, no marked improvement in the economic condition of the people, but the slight increase in the revenues of the province under several heads suggests that the worst of the economic depression is over. There might indeed have been a distinct amelioration in the condition of the masses had not the monsoon in 1935 been disappointing almost everywhere in the province except Purnea and parts of Orissa. In June and July there was a marked deficiency in the rainfall, while in August and September the rainfall was exceptionally heavy in certain areas causing floods in the Patna and Tirhut Divisions with considerable damage to the 'bhadai' and winter rice crops. In October the monsoon failed almost completely except in Orissa, with unfavourable results not only on the winter rice crops, at the time of seeding, but also on the germination and growth of the 'rabi' crop. Indeed, the all but entire absence of rain in the last quarter of the year did not give promise of a good 'rabi' harvest. The failure of the later rains gave the ground in December

the hard aspect of February, and already at the end of the year the wells in the Ranchi district were beginning to dry up.

The effect of the unfavourable harvests, however, is not likely to make itself fully felt till the following April or May when a temporary set-back in the condition of the agriculturists is feared. The scanty harvests in the districts of Bengal bordering on the Bhagalpore Division reacted unfavourably on agricultural labourers in that division, who, in good years, secure employment during the harvest season across the borders.

To relieve distress among the agriculturists, caused by floods and failure of crops, Government gave a sum of just under two lakhs of rupees for free grants and just under four lakhs as 'taccavi' loans. In parts of Singhbhum district the partial failure of crops in the previous season gave cause for anxiety, and in addition to a sum of over Rs. 70,000 included in the 'taccavi' loans, already mentioned, a sum of Rs. 32,000 was spent on relief works for the benefit of the labouring classes in the Dhalbhum, Kolhan and Porahat areas of that district.

There were some bright features in the situation. The sugarcane season started in November with a slight rise in the minimum price of sugarcane which was at first fixed by Government at 5 and a half annas a maund, or half an anna more than the minimum price of the previous season. Unfortunately as the season advanced the price had to be reduced owing to the fall in the price of sugar and with the New Year it was at 5 annas once more. However, the increasing vigilance of the Sugarcane Inspectors appointed by Government to supervise the work of the Sugarcane Rules protected the sugarcane cultivators to a growing extent from the depredations of middlemen. The price of common rice continued to show a tendency to rise. In July the average price for the province was 11.97 seers to the rupee against 12.91 seers the year before, while at the close of the year it was 11.79 seers against 13.48 seers in the first week of 1935.

On the other hand the price of lac, which had almost doubled itself in the previous year owing to artificial manipulations of the market, fell back sharply to Rs. 25 per maund by the middle of the year. The daily wages of agricultural labour ranged between 1 anna 6 pies to 3 annas in Sambalpur district and 4 annas to 6 annas in Shahabad. The progress of earthquake and flood reconstruction work continued to furnish employment to labour, while the grants disbursed by Government and the Bihar Central Relief Committee, and the bonus of Rs. 10 lakhs awarded to their employees by the Tata Iron and steel Company put large sums into circulation.

Nevertheless in the districts of North and South Bihar there was a good deal of agitation organised by the Kishan Sabha against the burden of rents and canal rates. While much of the agitation was spurious there is no doubt that in some places, especially in the Gaya district, where produce rents had been commuted to cash rents during the period of high prices of agricultural produce, the great fall in the price of agricultural produce, estimated in 1934-35 to have fallen in this province by about 60 per cent as compared with the prices for 1928-29, made the burden of the cash rents very heavy on the tenants. On the other hand, owing to the Bihar Tenancy Act, 1934, which came into force in June and permitted the unrestricted transfer of 'rayati' land on payment of a fixed transfer fee of 8 per cent to the landlord, there was a distinct tendency, in the districts of Bihar proper for the price of agricultural land to rise and tenants were able to raise more money from the mortgage of their lands than before.

The average prices of cereals remained more or less at the same low level as before. There was a slight rise in the price of common rice which was selling at 12.18 seers a rupee in the second week of December as compared with 13.55 seers in the corresponding period of the previous year. On the other hand the price of maize in the same period fell from 17.64 seers per rupee in 1934 to 19.11 seers in 1935.

Agricultural conditions during the year were not satisfactory. The rains were neither well distributed nor sufficient in most places. The want of sufficient rain in June and July delayed the sowing of the 'bhada' crops, while excessive rainfall in August and September damaged the crops of the Tirhut and Patna Divisions. The complete failure of the rains in the last winter paddy crop not only adversely affected the outturn of the winter paddy crop but also the germination and growth of the ~~rain~~ crops. Fortunately, there is reason to believe that the reclamation of agricultural lands affected by earthquakes was almost completed during the year.

The appointment, during the year, of a Marketing officer and the Assistant Marketing officers for the province, was greeted with public satisfaction, as the importance of the proper development of agricultural marketing was widely recog-

nised. In collaboration with the Central Marketing staff the Provincial Marketing Staff was engaged in a comprehensive survey of the production and the marketing of various commodities throughout the province.

In November the local Government convened a small conference to review the working of the Sugarcane Act and Rules in the light of the previous year's experience. That the Sugarcane Act and Rules were widely appreciated by the people is shown by the popular satisfaction which marked the decision of Government to extend them to the Patna Division.

Agricultural Education was not neglected. Three of the four Government stipendiaries studying at Nagpur Agricultural College, who appeared at the last B. Agr. examination of the Nagpur University, were successful and were offered posts in the Subordinate Agricultural Service in the province. The Central Farms continued to train their own overseers and *kamtars* and an increasing desire among the public to benefit by the practical training offered in the Central Farms was manifest. At Sabour an M. Sc. in chemistry worked as an Honorary Research worker in the Chemical section.

Seven agricultural shows, exhibitions and fairs were held during the year. The Department of Agriculture not only encouraged these events by awarding prizes for agricultural exhibits to the extent of Rs. 900, but also itself participated in them by sending exhibits and holding demonstrations. The agricultural show at the Sonapur fair attracted large crowds as usual. At all these shows and exhibitions the department vigorously pursued its policy of impressing upon the agricultural classes the importance of good seeds, suitable manures and improved methods of cultivation. An interesting experiment was started at Ranchi in order to foster the growth of vegetables by the middle classes with the expert advice of the Agricultural Department.

Propaganda by means of the printed word was continued during the year. Three bulletins in English were issued, while the quarterly Hindi Journal "Kisan" published under the auspices of the Bihar and Orissa Provincial Association became increasingly popular.

The department lent the services of two of its overseers to the Publicity Officer for the purpose of the Silver Jubilee Magic Lantern lectures.

The Anglo-Indian colony at Lapra in the Ranchi district was in its third year, and continued to make slow progress. About 75 families have been settled and some 3,000 acres of land acquired. A dairy farm was opened. The experiment is being watched with sympathetic interest by all communities.

There was some slight lifting of the industrial depression during the year under review. Of the main industries in the province the sugar industry, in spite of the excise duty recently imposed, and the iron and steel industry continued to flourish under the protection of tariff walls. There was a welcome improvement in the mica industry and the exports of mica showed a substantial increase. The coal industry, however, did not show any marked signs of recovery, and the prevalence of extensive fires in the Jharia coalfield gravely menaced the well-being of one of the most important industrial areas in the province. The post-earthquake activity in the building and allied trades continued. For the fifth year in succession no Government grant was made under the State Aid to Industries Act, but provision was made in the budget for 1936-37 to assist small industrialists.

There was a slight set-back in the fish export trade. In 1935 the export of fresh fish totalled 77,110 maunds against 91,245 in 1934. This was, however, better than the figure for 1933, which was 69,980 maunds. In addition to the two previous fry-distribution centres at Patna and Cuttack, a third was established at Sambalpur. The total supply of fry from three centres was 331,500 against 320,000 in 1934. The figure for 1933, however, was 382,500. Possibly the vagaries of the monsoon with alternate periods of drought and flood over large areas accounts for much of the difference between the figures for 1933 and 1935 in spite of an additional distribution centre. There was a welcome increase in the demand for larvicidal fish from 1,586 in 1934 to 3,000 in 1935.

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# The U. P. Administration Report 1935

Socialistic influence in Congress politics in the United Provinces is reviewed at some length in the Administration report for 1935. There is an increasing preference on the part of Congressmen for work among the rural rather than among the urban population.

The political situation, it says, continued to cause no anxiety and there was a marked decrease in the more important forms of crime but communal relations unfortunately remained strained. The various departments of Government registered progress within the limits set by their restricted budget.

In view of the differences of opinion held by the various groups into which it was split during the preceding year, the Congress was naturally anxious to avoid any direct statement of its attitude towards many important questions of policy. To ensure obedience to its authority the Congress Working Committee at its meeting at Delhi in January 1935, found it necessary to make rules empowering it to take disciplinary action against any committee or member of the Congress who acted deliberately in opposition to the official programme and decisions of the Congress. The only other decision of importance reached there was that the Congress should occupy all places of power and vantage in its "struggle for freedom to assert the dominating will of the people". This decision was made public in a statement issued by Dr. Ambedkar and other Congress leaders in July 1935.

## CONGRESS DISSENTIONS

From the moment the June meeting of the United Provinces Congress Committee decided on Lucknow as the venue for the forty-ninth session of the Indian National Congress, Lucknow was the scene of bickerings between the local rival parties in connection with the office of Chairman of the Reception Committee. The differences were ultimately patched up by the election of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the post but a further dispute arose over the proportionate representation of parties on the Committee. Several Committee meetings at Lucknow which were marked by stormy scenes, having failed to come to an amicable settlement, a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee held at Agra in November 1935 decided to form a board of five "dictators" with absolute power to control and carry on the work of the Congress in this province and to make all the arrangements for the holding of the next Congress session.

Personal rivalries and discord were not confined to Lucknow but were also a feature of several District Congress committees, and in a few cases culminated in assaults in connection with the local board elections. A number of opposition parties such as the "Congressmen's Party" in Allahabad, the "Independent Congress Party" in Jhansi and the "Congress Kisan Party" in Meerut had been constituted and so acute were the differences between the different sections of the Congress, that a Provincial Civic Board composed of five prominent Congressmen of this province was formed to nominate candidates and to conduct elections. The disagreements however which soon arose between the Civic Board and several district Congress committees, notably those at Allahabad and Cawnpore led to the resignation of some members of the Provincial Congress Committee and of the Provincial Civic Board. Some measure of harmony was ultimately restored after protracted negotiation of the Civic Board with additional powers. Although in some places successful, the Congress Party on the whole achieved little; and in some districts notably lost ground.

## SOCIALIST PARTY

One of the important developments of the year was the growth of the Congress Socialist Party. This party gained in influence by the transfer of the office of the General Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party from Patna to Benares. A meeting of the Executive Committee held in Benares in July passed several resolutions which affirmed that the policy of the party was to wreck the reforms, to organise the peasants and workers in one corporate mass to overthrow the forces

of capitalism and to work for the cancellation of peasants' debts and the elimination of landlords and 'taluqdars'. Congress socialists took advantage of political conferences held in villages and tahsils to organise unions for peasants and labourers and further their own propaganda. A circular issued by Mr. Jai Prakash Narain and General Secretary emphasised the Socialist party's opposition to the principles of those of "revolutionary unionism" as laid down by Marx and Lenin. As a result of disputes over the local board elections the Congress Socialists who preponderated in the old executive committee resigned almost in a body in October and were replaced by members of the right wing.

#### REFORMS REACTION

Socialistic influence is resulting in an increasing preference on the part of Congressmen for work among the rural rather than among the urban population. Seeing in the peasantry a promising field of propaganda the Congress is extending the sphere of its activities and a number of 'Kisan' conferences were organised in tahsils, small towns and districts. The enrolment of Congress members was continued in order to complete the quota required of each district.

Branches of the All-India Village Industries Association were established in Muttra and Gorakhpur in February and later on, at Meerut. Subsequently a few weaving schools were started in Haldwani and the Agra district, an industrial school at Ali-garh and a depot in Gonda. The Association, however, has met with little success in the province and the provincial organising centre at Parkham in the Muttra district had to close down chiefly for want of funds.

The Annual Session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Cawnpore in April under the presidency of Rev. Ottama, a Buddhist Priest of Burma. Its resolutions approving of the action of the authorities in firing on the Muslim rioters in Karachi and condemning the Communal Award aroused the antagonism of the Muslims especially in Cawnpore. The Sabha also condemned the Government of India Bill. After the session the President toured the province delivering speeches condemning the separation of Burma from India and pleading for the formation of a Buddhist-Hindu federation.

Constitutional reform was much discussed throughout the year and received particular attention during the passage of the Government of India Bill through Parliament whose amendments were alleged by the Congress and advanced Liberal organs to have intensified the already unsatisfactory and retrograde character of the Bill. For the rest, Press comments ranged from a strong condemnation to qualified approval but were little more than a repetition of those evoked by the publication of the Report of the Joint Select Committee. The features selected for particular attack were the increased cost of the administration involved in the proposals as likely to lead to increased taxation, the commercial safeguards in favour of Britain as calculated to retard the development of national trade, and the communal award which would perpetuate and even accentuate communal tension.

While the Congress papers openly advocated the wrecking of the constitution, Liberal papers as a rule were in favour of working it with a view to securing the fullest representation of advanced and nationalist opinion. Muslim papers in general followed the Liberal press subject to some criticism of detail and the expression in some quarters of the necessity for countering the danger of Hindu domination in provinces like the United Provinces by returning to the legislature only representatives who could be relied upon to safeguard Muslim interests. Such papers as support Government together with certain important independent organs claimed that the Bill would provide a substantial improvement on the present constitution, defended the safeguards as necessary, and, deprecating a policy of obstruction, pleaded for genuine and wholehearted co-operation in working the new constitution.

The question whether Congressmen should or should not accept office under the New Constitution was much discussed, the more influential among the extremist papers ultimately arriving at the conclusion that the acceptance of office by Congressmen would be inconsistent with their creed of non-co-operation and their goal of complete independence.

#### AGAINST ZAMINDARI

There was a considerable increase in the volume and intensity of the propaganda in the extremist Hindi papers directed against the established order and in particular

against the 'zamindari' system and Indian States. In their comments on the economic depression these papers attempted to prove that the poverty of the agricultural and labouring classes could be removed only by the reorganisation of the State in accordance with communistic principles. Communism was in fact extolled in some quarters as the panacea for all the ills from which society and the country suffer. The number of advocates of this creed was increased by the conversion of a number of the older papers and by the appearance of several new papers, two being in English, of Socialistic views. The propaganda was in some cases direct but was often cloaked in the guise of stories and biographies of Communists like Lenin, Stalin, and Karl Marx or took the form of reproducing their speeches and writings. Several papers sought to represent Russia as a modern Utopia for peasants and labourers, published eulogistic accounts of Russian institutions and administration and of the part played by young men in establishing a communistic regime. The same papers denounced the Indian National Congress as a 'bourgeois' institution and urged that freedom could only be secured by class war and the organisation of peasants and workers. Indian Ruling Chiefs were denounced as enemies of nationalism and their existence as the negation of democracy.

#### RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Government's rural development scheme was widely discussed. Fears were entertained that most of the money would be spent on the salaries of the staff rather than on ameliorating the condition of the rural population. Congress organs sought to represent the scheme as a counterblast to Mr. Gandhi's Village Industries Association and alleged that Government's main object on allotting one crore of rupees to this work was to re-establish and maintain their own hold over the rural area. Some influential Muslim papers on the other hand, looked upon Mr. Gandhi's scheme as a political device to further the interests of the Congress and commended the wisdom of Government in thwarting it by its own measures for rural uplift.

Comments on the Italo-Abyssinian War were marked by condemnation of Italy, sympathy with the Abyssinians and criticism of the attitude of France, Britain and the League of Nations.



# **EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN INDIA**

**JANUARY—JUNE 1936**



# Educational Progress in India

## Education in India 1934-35

A glance at the provincial education reports of 20 years ago and a comparison of them with the reports for the years 1933-34 would show that provinces long recorded as backward have in many ways come up to the level of advanced provinces, says the report prepared by the Government of India on Education in India for the year April 31st 1933 to March 31st 1934. "Communities which scarcely ever recorded pupils above the primary stage now have considerable representation at the university stage. Untouchability has been definitely eradicated in several provinces in so far as the schools are concerned, and the progress of education amongst the depressed classes has been considerable. Women's education has spread with remarkable rapidity and the educationally backward communities amongst women, such as Muslim women, have shown immense improvement. Physical instruction and athletics have developed out of all recognition and movements like the Olympic organisations, the Boy Scouts movement, the Girl Guides movement, the Red Cross movement, etc., have taken firm root. Village life has widened and schemes for rural uplift, village club, thrift societies and even village broadcasting are no longer unknown.

"The necessity for the trained teacher has been recognised almost everywhere and the numbers of trained teachers have been more than doubled. Considerable advance has been made in scientific research and in Technology and in their application to industry. The need for caution in the quantitative expansion of mass education has been fully recognised and consolidation and concentration are being attempted in most provinces. The evil of waste, stagnation and wastage which were scarcely recognised or diagnosed 20 years ago have been tackled and are being tackled with signs of ultimate success in most parts of India. There is however, it is true, a general dissatisfaction with many of the existing conditions. Universities are overcrowded, secondary education is too stereotyped, primary education is still too little related to the surrounding conditions of life and unemployment presents a grave problem. But there has been very real progress. Education is much more widespread and India is not alone in having to face difficult problems in education arising out of world depression and financial stringency. "It is satisfactory" continues the report "at least that the whole of India is now considering very seriously educational reconstruction and that a machinery has been created for the co-operation of every part of India in an attempt to solve some of the outstanding problems."

During the year under review the total number of educational institutions increased by 1,377 against a fall of 2,445 in the previous year. "The mere increase in the number of institutions is no index of progress," opines the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India. The large fall in the previous year in Madras, for example, was mainly due to a deliberate policy of providing a better and more economic distribution of schools. There has been a further fall in the number of institutions in four provinces and the total number of institutions in India would have again declined but for an increase of 1,509 institutions in Bengal. Only one other province shows a considerable increase 179 in Bihar and Orissa which is entirely accounted for by a rise in the number of unrecognised schools. Although, leaving aside Bengal, there has been a decrease in the number of institutions, there has been a very satisfactory increase in the number of pupils, an increase of 319,368 as against an increase of only 86,095 in the previous year. Taking recognised institutions alone, the increase was 299,639 as against 69,671 in the previous year. In spite of a decrease of 457 institutions in Madras its total enrolment increased by 103,075 and Bombay with a decrease of 83 institutions increased its enrolment by 34,332."

Between the years 1932 and 1933 all provinces and administrations except Delhi, Coorg and the minor administrations, showed a heavy fall in total expenditure, but during the year 1933-34 all provinces and administrations showed a considerable increase in total expenditure except the United Provinces, Burma and Assam. In spite of the prevailing economic depression and decline in the revenue per head of the population there has been some considerable improvement in ability of provincial governments to provide additional funds for education.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN INDIA

## EXPENDITURE

The following table shows for the years 1937 and 1934 the expenditure from government fund on education and the percentage of total revenue spent on education in the provinces :

Province.	1937	
	Total Govt. Expenditure.	Percentage of total revenue spent on education.
	Lakhs.	Per cent.
Madras	302	13.3
Bombay	199	13.6
Bengal	148	14.0
U. P.	196	17.2
Punjab	151	13.9
Burma	95	9.4
B. & O.	72	12.5
C. P.	72	14.2
Assam	25	10.2
N. W. F. P.		

  

Province.	1934	
	Total Govt. expenditure.	Percentage of total revenue spent on education.
	Lakhs.	Per cent.
Madras	246	15.9
Bombay	176	12.1
Bengal	135	14.9
U. P.	198	17.3
Punjab	160	14.0
Burma	58	6.8
B & O.	55	11.1
C. P.	44	10.2
Assam	28	14.0
N. W. F. P.	19	11.0

Between 1933 and 1934 the largest increase of recent years in the enrolment to Universities has occurred and the total number of students in the universities has risen by 6861 to 113,328. The only falling off in numbers has occurred in Dacca, Delhi, the Osmania University, the Andhra University and the Annamalai University, and the total fall in these five universities amounted to only 382. On the other hand the Calcutta University alone showed an increase of 4,104 and the Punjab and Bombay Universities have each increased nearly 1,000. Fortunately expansion has been accompanied by the institution of new types of courses, including scientific and technological courses, which are to be welcomed as providing not only more variety but more practical courses related to research and industry.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

The problem of the continued unemployment of large numbers of University products has continued to exercise the minds of all those responsible for the control of higher education. The time is coming, says the report, when the question of deliberate restriction must be seriously considered both in the interests of efficiency and in the interest of lessening educated unemployment. It is usually urged that such restriction will particularly adversely affect poor scholars and scholars coming from backward communities. Actually this objection is not a very valid one, since an expansion of the present system which exists in many colleges of reservations, free places and scholarships should meet any difficulties which stand in the way of clever but poor scholars and scholars from educationally backward communities.

A comparison of the figures for the year under consideration with those for the last few years shows that the total number of male candidates for the university examination, excluding the matriculation, is more or less constant whereas the number of girls is showing an appreciable increase every year. In general, girls have shown better results than boys. The pass percentages for girls in the various university examinations are considerably better than those for boys.

## INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

The Indian students studying in the United Kingdom during 1933-34 numbered 1,293 as against 1,478 in the previous year. The Indian students known to be studying in Europe increased from 111 to 115 and the number of Indian students in the United States of America increased from 101 to 152.

The number of primary schools for boys increased by 344 and their enrolment increased by 214,817. These increases compare favourably with a decrease of 2,299 in the number of schools in the previous year and with an increased enrolment of only 26,504. It is also satisfactory that the increase in enrolment of boys is not confined to the lowest classes but is shared by all the five primary classes.

The average number of pupils per school is abnormally low. For India as a whole it is only 50, while in Japan, for example, it is over 300. If the primary schools in the provinces were better organised and larger in size a great deal of waste in expenditure could be avoided. In Bengal, for example, if the primary schools had the same average in number as Bombay 1,700,000 more pupils would be under instruction without the provision of any additional schools. Similarly Bihar and Orissa would have more than double their present number of pupils at school if the province had the same average as Central Provinces.

As regards co-education, the report says that experience has shown that one special factor which militates against larger enrolments in the primary schools in both advanced and backward provinces is the attitude of teachers and the inspectorate towards separate boys' schools and separate girls' schools. Except in a very limited number of areas there is at the present time little prejudice against co-education in the lowest Primary classes but it is common to find that in rural areas in which there are only boys' primary schools no endeavour is being made to encourage the girls of school age to attend the boys' schools. Similarly, in rural areas in which there are only girls' primary schools no endeavour is made to encourage the boys of school age to attend the girls' schools.

The backward position of girls in education as compared with the position of boys has for many years occupied the attention of the Provinces. While unfortunately there still remains a wide discrepancy between the relative position of boys and girls there are encouraging signs that the attention paid to girls' education in recent years had not gone unrewarded. The rate of progress of girls' education has, in a number of provinces, become quicker than that of boys. The number of institutions for girls has largely increased. Co-education at the primary stage has become far more common and the number of women teachers has been largely augmented. The total amount expended on girls' education has risen in most provinces in spite of the financial stringency and provinces which a few years ago could show hardly any progress in the higher education of women are now sending out nearly as many women as the other more forward provinces. There are, in fact, definite signs that the women's movement in India in all its aspects has created an awakening of ideas which is overriding custom and prejudice and which is manifesting itself in the increased willingness of all classes of the community to have their girls and women educated.

Between 1933 and 1934 the total expenditure on institutions for girls has increased in all provinces except in the United Provinces. The total expenditure for British India shows an increase of Rs. 11.18 lakhs in 1934 as against a fall of nearly 13 lakhs in 1933. To this increase Bombay contributed Rs. 3.17 lakhs, Punjab Rs. 1.77 lakhs, Madras Rs. 1.39 lakhs and Bengal Rs. 0.79 lakhs.

## MUSLIM EDUCATION

As regards the Muslim Education, the total enrolment has declined in Bombay, the Punjab, Burma, Bihar and Orissa, Assam and Delhi. The decrease in Bombay was almost entirely confined to unrecognised schools and to Mulla schools in Sind. The fall in the number of pupils in the Punjab is attributed to the general agricultural depression. The decrease in Burma was small and it was mainly confined to colleges and to unrecognised institutions. In 1917 there were only 5,212 Muslim scholars in arts colleges and university departments, while in 1934 as many as 12,158 Muslim boys were reading in arts colleges and 2,272 in professional colleges. The figures of Muslim girls are much more encouraging than those of Muslim boys. The enrolment in all the major provinces has considerably increased and the total number of Muslim girls under instruction in India increased between 1933 and 1934 by 38,181 and if unrecognised schools are excluded from the figures the total increase was over 4,000. The position in the Punjab is perhaps the most striking since the Punjab has for many years had the lowest percentage of Muslim girls under instruction to the total

Muslim population in India and yet in 1934 the Punjab had the largest number of Muslim ladies reading at the university stage and at the secondary stage.

There has been an increase of over 69,000 students belonging to depressed classes during the year as against an increase of under 13,000 in the previous year.

## Education in Madras 1934-35

The Government of Madras, in their review of the report on educational progress in the Presidency between 1934-35, observe:—

In the year under review, a Bill to amend the Madras Elementary Education Act, 1920, was passed into law. The Amending Act which has recently been brought into force gives Government power to order in any specified area the introduction of a modified form of compulsion under which children who have attended school for a prescribed period should not be withdrawn from school before they complete their school-age. It is hoped in this way to check the appalling wastage in elementary education and to diminish the number of those who spend a year or two (or in some cases less) at an elementary school and then relapse in a few years' time and for the rest of their lives into a state of permanent illiteracy.

The number of students reading in Arts Colleges showed a decrease during the year. This may be attributed partly to the general financial depression and partly to the increasing realization on the part of parents that the possession of a University degree is not a sure road to employment and a successful career in life. In any case, the slight reduction in the number of students in the first grade Arts Colleges from 9,209 to 8,847 is not a matter for regret.

Substantial changes were made in the S. S. L. C. scheme and the modified scheme was put into operation in the fourth form of secondary schools during the year under review. Since the close of the year the S. S. L. C. Board has reported that the modified scheme is not altogether satisfactory and has recommended that it might be held in abeyance pending further consideration. The Government have accepted this recommendation. The number of pupils under instruction in secondary schools for boys decreased from 179,411 in 1933-34 to 177,220.

There was a further increase in the number of pupils attending elementary schools for boys. Compulsory elementary education for boys of school-age was newly introduced during the year in Bezvada municipality. The schemes prepared by the local officers of the Department for the consolidation and concentration of elementary schools in municipal areas were under examination by Government during the year under review. The Government are glad that several local bodies have realized the usefulness of schemes of consolidation of schools and are taking steps to give effect to them as is evidenced by the reduction in the number of elementary schools for boys from 43,976 to 43,787 accompanied by an increase in strength from 2,338,608 to 2,417,410.

The number of elementary schools for girls has similarly decreased from 5,484 to 5,336 but here again the strength has risen from 374,430 to 381,013. The girls attending these schools, however, constituted less than half of the total number of girls reading elementary schools in the Presidency, for there were as many as 458,853 girls reading in elementary schools for boys—an appreciable increase over the previous year's figure of 420,311. In this connection, the Govt. would very strongly commend to local bodies and private agencies maintaining schools the desirability of employing women teachers in the lower standards of boys' schools, more particularly where there is an appreciable number of girls reading in these standards. The practice of employing men teachers in girls' schools should be definitely discontinued and those men teachers who are at present teaching in girls' schools, of whom there are far too many, should be provided with posts in boys' schools.

The total number of girls reading in secondary schools was 26,537 (as compared with 25,198 in 1933-34. The total number of girls under instruction in all grades of schools rose by about 5 per cent.

There was an increase in the number of Mohammedan pupils in elementary schools but the number in secondary schools showed a decrease.

It is gratifying to note that the number of pupils of the scheduled castes reading in schools not specially intended for them has again risen by about 8 per cent over last year's figure.

In the field of European Education the year was noteworthy for the admission of men teachers for the first time into the Doveton Training School, Madras.

The Provincial Board for Anglo-Indian and European Education met twice during the year.

## Education in Travancore 1934-35

A marked increase in the strength of English Schools, the introduction of Hindi as a second language in certain schools, provisions of free medical treatment in hospitals and rapid progress in women's education are the important features of the report for 1934-35 of the Travancore Education Department which has been recorded by the Government.

During the year under review there was a heavy fall under receipts on account of the reduction of the rates of school fees as a temporary measure, due to the general financial depression. The concession involved not only loss in the receipts of Departmental Schools but also additional expenditure by way of compensation to private management for loss of fee income.

### COLLEGIATE EDUCATION

The number of students attending the Colleges affiliated to the Madras University was 2,792 at the end of 1110 against 2,815 at the end of 1109. There was thus a total fall of only 23. The principle of restricting admissions to the Junior Intermediate and Junior B. A. Classes of the Government Colleges by slightly raising the standard for admission was accepted by the Government for the first time. The restrictions were, however, very moderate in character as only those candidates who had failed more than twice in the S. S. L. C. or the Intermediate Examinations were refused admission into the Junior Inter. or the Junior B. A. Class. Even in applying the above restrictions exceptions were made mainly in the case of backward communities and women.

Medical inspection was conducted during the year in all the Colleges. The Veda Section of the Sanskrit College was transferred to the control of the Devaswom Department.

The total number of English Schools during 1110 M. E. (1934-35) was 275 and the total number of pupils under instruction in them 58,893 as against 272 institutions and 53,831 pupils in 1109. The number of English Schools thus increased by three and the strength in them by 5062 in 1934-35.

### RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

The total expenditure of the Education Department amounted to Rs. 47,23,208 and the total receipts to Rs. 8,10,412 against Rs. 46,91,482 and Rs. 8,95,233 respectively in the previous year. The decrease in receipts is mainly accounted for by the reduction of fees in schools.

More attention was devoted to organised games in schools and there was an awakening in games and sports in schools and student competitors to the Olympic Meet at Madras won distinction.

Hindi was introduced as a second language in form IV of the S. M. V. School, Trivandrum, and encouragement was given for the opening of Hindi Classes in some private schools. A course of vacation lectures in geography were given by Miss K. S. Ranga Rao, Principal of the New College for Women, Nagpur.

A scheme for the medical inspection of children in primary schools providing for free medical treatment in the hospitals and dispensaries of the State was approved by the Government.

## WOMEN'S EDUCATION

The number of girls under instruction during the year under review was 2,89,444 as against 2,57,008 in 1109 and 2,48,883 in 1108 showing a steady increase of well over 10,000 from year to year. Co-education was largely prevalent in all types of institutions. More attention was being paid to games and athletics in all girls' schools, especially English Schools, during the year.

There was an increase in the number of Mahomedans under instruction at all stages during the year. The number of Mahomedan girls under instruction in English Schools was 240 as against 99 in the previous year. The number of depressed and backward pupils reading in all stages of education also showed considerable increase.

The total number of recognised institutions in the State during the year was 3,699 and the number under instruction 6,74,517. There was thus a fall in the total number of institutions by 50, due mainly to the abolition of overlapping and incomplete vernacular schools but the total number of pupils under instruction increased by 24,949 over the figure for the previous year. The percentage of the total number of pupils to the total population in 1110 M. E. was 13.2 as against 12.7 in 1109.

## Education in Mysore 1934-35

"The Government are aware of the need of the Department for more money for addition to staff, equipment and accommodation and are doing whatever is possible under the unfavourable financial conditions now prevailing. They are pleased to observe that with the resources available the Department has, under the guidance of the Director, Mr. N. S. Subba Rao, done efficient and satisfactory work during the year". This is the observation of the Government of Mysore in their review of the report on the working of the Department of Public Instruction during the year 1934-35, issued on the 16th. March 1936.

The Government also express their thanks to the members of the public who co-operated with the Department and supplemented the efforts of the Government in the cause of education.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The number of primary schools showed a slight fall by four from 6,254 to 6,250 but there was a noticeable increase in the strength by 3,806 pupils from 245,373 to 249,573. Of these, 5,735 schools were for boys (with a strength of 216,721) and 515 schools for girls (with a strength of 32,857). Classified according to languages, there were 5,006 Kannada schools, 622 Urdu, 7 Telugu, 9 Tamil and one Marathi school. The percentage of boys in the primary schools to the total male population of school-going age, calculated at 15 per cent of the total population, was 43.93 as against 43.4 in the year previous.

The Government observe that the finances of some of the local Education Authorities, particularly of the Shimoga District which has a large minus balance, are not satisfactory. It has also not been possible for the Government, the review states, in the present conditions of finance to meet the entire cost of the scheme as desired by some of the Local Education Authorities. The Government point out that the Local Education Authorities have to augment their resources as contemplated in the Regulation. Proposals for a levy of education fees in the Municipal areas have been received from the Local Education Authorities of Chitaldrug, Hassan and Kolar Districts and these are under consideration.

In view, however, of the pressing demand for primary schools, a scheme prepared by the Director for opening as many new or grant-in-aid schools as possible in different areas in the State, aided schools being opened as departmental schools, has been sanctioned by the Government and a sum of Rs. 15,000 provided for the purpose in the budget for 1935-36.

The Government note with pleasure the large number of benefactions made by members of the public during the year to supply the need for school buildings,



## EDUCATION OF GIRLS

There were 562 separate schools for girls of all grades of education with a total strength of 36,554 (of whom 919 were boys) as against 583 schools with a strength of 35,814 (including 829 boys) in the previous year. The fall in the number of girls' schools is due to the amalgamations of several girls' schools with the boys' schools. The Government are glad to note that the number of girls seeking admission is increasing in all grades of institutions and that girls are freely entering into boys' schools in places where there are no separate institutions for them.

The total expenditure on education for women (including University education) was Rs. 6,93,185 (exclusive of indirect expenditure such as scholarships, buildings and equipment) as against Rs. 6,93,209 in the previous year.

A sum of Rs. 5,74,634 or 11.71 per cent. of the total direct expenditure on education was spent on Muslim education.

The scout Movement, the Government observe, continued to be popular and was making good progress during the year. The Girl Guide movement which was organised in 1933 progressed remarkably well.

## EXPENDITURE

The total expenditure both direct and indirect on Public Instruction (including that on University education) amounted to Rs. 63,80,131. On an average, there was one school for every 3.8 sq. miles in area and 832 persons of the total population. One out of every 3.3 of the population of school-going age was under instruction, and the proportion was 1 in 20.24 as against 20.59 in the previous year. The percentage of boys under instruction to the total male population was 7.6, that of females to the female population was 2.2 and that of boys and girls under instruction to the population was 4.9.

The average cost of education per head of population was Rs. 0-15-11 as against Rs. 1-1-3 in the previous year. Of this amount a sum of Rs. 0-12-6 was met from State funds as against Rs. 0-13-7 in 1933-34.

In conclusion, the Government observe that they are glad to learn that the administration of Primary Education by the Local Education Authorities and School Boards was satisfactory and that there was hearty co-operation and harmonious relationship between the departmental officers and these bodies, and the members of the Local Education Authorities took keen interest in the discussions at meetings.

## Educational Reconstruction in Burma

Suggestions of far-reaching importance touching practically every aspect of education, general and technical, in Burma are made in the Report of Vernacular and Vocational Educational Reorganisation Committee which was issued to the Press in June 1936.

The report lays considerable stress of the need for the development of vocational and technical education in agriculture and animal husbandry and other technical occupations in the province. It suggests the constitution of a central education authority with effective powers of control to reduce illiteracy and to relate education to life and occupation in Burma. It recommends the constitution of a special committee by Government to make plans for the development of wireless broadcasting as an economical and potent adjunct to the education, service and the other social and technical services directed by Government.

The report proposes that, consistent with the Government of Burma Act, 1935, a Board of Education consisting of not less than half the number of Ministers constituting the Council of Ministers, with the Ministers of Education as President be constituted with effective powers of control, supervision and initiative and suggests the improvement of the Secretariat of the Board of Education to secure more continuity and consistency of educational policy. It reviews and examines the inspectorate and its functions and makes proposals to develop the efficiency of the inspectorate and the utility and efficiency of instruction in the schools.

The Committee proposes that the constitution and powers of local education authorities be adjusted so that appropriate and equitable representation of all public and private interests in education shall be achieved and to the end that the administration of education by local bodies shall be directed solely to the educational welfare of the children and be un-influenced by considerations which are irrelevant.

Educational provision in "excluded" areas and in backward areas which are outside the rural self-governing areas is examined and future policy is suggested. The Committee makes a thorough examination of the problems of illiteracy and of 'wastage' and wastefulness in the primary vernacular schools and suggests various proposals. They recommend ways and means that should be adopted by local authorities to complete an accurate survey of existing educational provision and deficiencies in their jurisdiction. Plans are formulated and measures are described which should be initiated immediately to attack illiteracy and stop 'wastage' and to commence development that will pave the way eventually, in progressive stages and during period of 5, 10, 15 and more years towards compulsory education for all. The first stage recommended is, under legislative authority, local option schemes of compulsory attendance for three years after voluntary enrolment. This is designed in the first place to consolidate the existing system of primary schools and to create a sound foundation for further development.

#### DIFFERENT STAGES OF EDUCATION

The Committee makes detailed proposals to bring about co-ordination and re-organisation of the system of schools and reconstruction of curricula for the co-ordinated and re-organised system. The reconstruction visualises the diversification of the existing single-track book-lore curriculum of the Anglo-vernacular and English schools and the bringing of the pupil of the Vernacular school into the general and particular streams of a homogenous education system and to relate schooling more intimately to life and occupation and leisure in Burma. The reorganisation of the existing differentiated system of schools in a co-ordinated yet diversified system of primary schools for children aged 6 to 11 years, of post-primary schools for adolescents aged 11 to 15 years, and of vocational and pre-University schools for youths aged 15 to 18 and more years of age is suggested. The construction implies the separation of 'intermediate' education from University education proper and the conduct of 'intermediate' courses and the part of the existing high school courses in selected high schools throughout the province. The liberal and cultural subjects will remain the foundation of the curricula. The place of languages in the curricula is discussed and adjustments of existing courses are suggested. Science courses with appropriate content related to conditions in Burma, it is suggested, should become compulsory components of the curricula. Physical education, personal and public hygiene and practical instruction in a craft or an art, it is argued, should be part of the education of every pupil in primary and post-primary schools.

The training of teachers and the re-organisation of training to equip teachers to fulfil the role prescribed for them in the re-organised and re-constructed schools are discussed at length and comprehensive proposals are made touching not only the training of all grades of teachers in the public service of education but also the many matters concerning the teaching profession.

#### FINANCIAL POLICY

The report reviews the financial policy of Government in regard to vernacular education since the inception of local self-governing authorities and recommends that the principle that local authorities are responsible for the whole cost of vernacular education should be modified and that the finance of vernacular education should be based as it is based in other democratic systems of education, on a system of authoritative central and delegated local administration and financial responsibility. The committee propose that vernacular primary education should be based on a system of central taxes and local rates and that to imbue local authorities with the realities of their responsibilities as self-governing administrators of education, local authorities should be directly responsible for the raising of their share of the cost of vernacular primary education.

The representatives of non-Burmese communities, namely European, Anglo-Indian and Indian, feel that if the recommendations of the Committee are put into effect, a great deal of the discontent now prevailing among minority groups in connection with educational provision and administration will disappear.

# THE INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS

23rd. Session—Indore—2nd. January 1936

His Highness the Maharaja Holkar of Indore inaugurated on the 2nd. January 1936 the 23rd session of the Indian Science Congress in Indore before a gathering of scientists from all over the country and visitors, including Sir S. M. Bapna, the Prime Minister, other ministers, high officers and prominent citizens of Indore State.

## Welcome Address

Dr. P. Basu, Vice-Chancellor of the Agra University, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates gave a survey of the great scientific discoveries in various fields in recent years and their immense effect on practical life, changing the very face of the earth. But the final mystery eluded the scientist's grasp and the Pandora's Box remained closed. He added that they were not nearer the end of their perplexity when told that what they saw were probably in point of events, in geometrical configuration, mere depressions in the vortex of energy. Practically life was healthier, more efficient and more comfortable to-day, but the aspect of things had entirely changed and the old machinery of social life had been suddenly thrown out of gear, and there was maladjustment of human personality which had yet to find a level in the new environment.

Scientific methods, said Dr. Basu, had demolished the old religion and moral ideas were dominated by personal god but religion had failed to develop and fill the gap left by Science, because scientific ideas had been isolated from religion by habit, tradition and inertia, weakening the strongest social force and leaving social expediency as the only guide to action and social decorum as the only restraint on emotional expression.

Another non adjustment, Dr. Basu pointed out, was in the balance of human personality. Here science was up against greater difficulty, battling with human passions and emotions but without such adjustment, leading to intellectual and emotional balance man might like Faust win the world and yet be damned. Therefore work co-ordinating and dovetailing conclusions of all sciences was necessary. But neither the scientist nor the philosopher had considered it his business and this work was left to private enterprise, working for personal profit, which was not only insufficient but dangerous to society. He hoped that experts would not take up this co-ordination for the benefit of humanity.

## Presidential Address

In the course of his address *Sir Upendranath Brahmachari*, the President, referred at length to the progress of science in the different fields like Bio-Chemistry (in which he dealt with the present-day conception of dietetics), Physiology, Genetics, Chemistry, Physics, Geology, Psychology and Mathematics, tracing the latest development in each field and pointing out how they help the treatment of diseases.

Adverting to problem of nutrition and the problem of a perfect diet, he made a reference to Indian dietary and said:

"Nearly 80 years ago, Chevers taught that the dietary of the Hindus with a very moderate quantity of animal food was the fittest for a tropical climate. Thus he wrote: 'It is certain, that the law-givers, who prescribed for the people of India a diet consisting mainly of vegetables and water, the lighter kinds of animal food, such as fish, pigeon's and goat's flesh, being only occasionally introduced in moderate quantities, judged almost as physiologically as they could have done, had they studied at the feet of Liebig and Prout'. Similarly in a discussion on the dietary of man, the meatless diet of some of the finest soldiers of His Majesty's Indian Army who fought in the last great world war was highly extolled. This is an interesting subject for research in the quest of minimum animal protein required for human consumption and the future may show that it may be influenced by climatic conditions. Recent researches of Berg tend to show that apart from the nature of proteins, there are other factors which determine the minimum quantity of protein necessary to preserve nitrogenous equilibrium, such as, the particular protein the subject is accustomed to taking and the ratio of inorganic bases to inorganic acids available to be formed in the body of the subject."

This brings us to the question of animal versus vegetable protein. Investigators of the present-day hold that, in general, proteins of animal origin are superior to the vegetable proteins for the purposes of nutrition and that the testimony of human vegetarians is useless in determining the amount of animal protein requirement of man, because they were probably not vegetarians during the first part of their lives.

"In recent times some interesting work has been done with the balanced diets for Indians by Tilak and his assistants. The dietary worked out by them is the inclusion with the staple food grains in common use by the people of India, of soya-beans, dried skimmed milk, rice polishings, fresh ground-nut cake and preparation of sprouted seeds. Such dietaries, if confirmed, may help in solving the problem facing large masses of people in India, i.e., how to obtain a reasonably good diet for 5 to 7 rupees a month. Aykroyd has found that diets which, in paper at least, adequately fulfil human requirements can be bought in Madras for about Rs. 4 per month. Cheap balanced diets of this nature must, of course, be subjected to the test of practice.

"Perhaps millions of the people of India, especially among the poor classes, suffer from the various degrees of malnutrition which leads to lessened power of resistance to infection. McCarrison's work in this field is wellknown. Sanitation and nutrition must go hand in hand in all countries especially in India, where so many diseases, epidemic and endemic, prevail.

"In India where diabetes is common, the proper dietary of the disease is an important subject, and I shall very briefly refer to it. Since the epoch-making discovery of insulin in the treatment of diabetes, the pendulum is swinging from the fat diet of Newburgh and Marsh to 'high' and 'higher' carbo-hydrate diet of Sansum and others. Recently it has been observed that administration of carbo-hydrate stimulates the production of an unknown insulin-kinase, the insulin acting as a substrate in the metabolism of sugar (Himsworth). On the other hand large amounts of fat may inhibit the action of insulin. On this view a 'high' or 'higher' carbohydrate diet for diabetes aided by insulin finds a rational support and it is possible that, by the adoption of such a diet, the life of a diabetic may be more prolonged and death rate from diabetes more reduced than what has been achieved in the present day, in spite of the introduction of insulin.

Tracing the growth of Physiological knowledge he said :—

Recent researches have thrown light on the mechanism of the fundamental reflex reaction for the protection of the animals and have shown how with the evolution of an anti-gravity mechanism and of extended movement, the brain stem has become evolved to take over this increased responsibility. Magnus has analysed the various nervous stimuli from the periphery which are concerned in this very delicately co-ordinated mechanism. The new data have completely revolutionised our conception of the nervous system, and signs and symptoms of disease which hitherto could not be properly understood, have now become capable of analysis.

It has been held that the ductless glands are the 'glands of our destiny' and that 'these potent overlords of our bodies are dictators of our minds and personalities'. It may be possible that the future may reveal that genius, intelligence, beauty, character, morality, and other human characteristics are dependent upon diverse combinations of the secretions of these bodies, just as their deficiency or excess may give rise to disease.

Insulin has completely changed the prospect of the treatment of diabetes. The discovery that Parathyroid extract mobilizes the calcium of the bones has revolutionised the treatment of diseases due to calcium derangement.

Our knowledge of the interaction of endocrines has increased in recent times. I would just mention a remarkable fact that, as shown by Houssay and co-workers, there is no glycosuria when both the pituitary and the pancreas are removed, and further that the injection of extract of the anterior pituitary is followed by the appearance of glycosuria.

May I end this portion of my address by making a little more reference to the pituitary, which seems to have a multiplicity of functions. It may be regarded as the headquarters for the hormones or the chemical messengers which control most of the other endocrine glands and thereby probably almost every cell of the body. The chemistry of the pituitary is by no means closed and it may be that the most important discoveries in the pituitary chapter have yet to be written.

Herring very recently has referred to the functions attributed by the ancients to the pituitary. We may make here a reference to the remarkable claims made by the ancient Yogis of India who practised what is known as Khechari Mudra. They elongated the tongue slowly by practice and manipulation aided by cutting its frenum, if necessary, and carefully introduced it into the nasopharynx. The Yogis claimed to have developed remarkable powers of their body and mind in this way. Did they conceive that the tongue mechanically stimulated the secretion of the granular structures in the nasopharynx (pituitary) which might be subsequently absorbed into the system, in the same way as ardenalin is absorbed when put under the tongue, and interact with the secretions of other endocrine glands? Will some future investigator test the validity of the above claims?

The recent invention in the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research jointly by Carrel and Lindbergh, of a 'Life Chamber', a sort of artificial body of heart, lungs and bloodstream has enabled scientists for the first time to keep the organs alive, functioning and even growing for a long period outside the body. The method of Carrel-Lindbergh consists of the transplantation of an organ or of any part of the body into a sterile chamber and its artificial feeding with a nutrient fluid through the arteries. In this way the thyroids and ovaries of animals have been artificially cultured, and made to grow. The perfusion fluid consists of protein hydrolytic products, haemin, cysteine, insulin, thyroxin, glutathione, vitamins A and C, blood serum and other substances according to the necessities of the particular organ to be perfused. There is no doubt that tissue culture is likely to be of immense importance in the study of the human body and in the preventive and curative treatment of diseases.

He then briefly referred to recent activities in the field of genetics and observed:

The practical outcome of the application of the principles of genetics as demonstrated by the magnificent work in research laboratories such as those at Cambridge, Edinburgh, Aberystwyth and Aberdeen, has been of immense value in improving crops and livestock. The boundless possibilities in heredity revealed by the science of genetics have placed great power in the hands of breeders of plants and animals and they can now tell with approximate accuracy what to expect from matings. This knowledge has revolutionised breeding in all directions, and resulted in the production of bigger and better plants and animals used for food, clothing or pleasure. In the course of time man may be able to replace the natural selection of more fertile mediocrity and the artificial sterility of high-grade parents by human selection and the artificial fertility of high-grade parents. Sooner or later the frequency of the latter would increase in geometrical progression and control and guide the qualities of mankind in any way it desires for the good of man. The future trend of creative evolution, including man's own destiny, depends on his response to the new knowledge and on his intelligent application of genetical discoveries, in the near as well as distant future (Hurst). Genetics aided by better environments may also be able to prevent the transmission of hereditary weakness and hereditary diseases, some of which are sex-linked. In this way it may lead to the production of better type of men, free from diseases of the mind and body that are propagated from father or mother to their children and thus the difficult task of medicine for averting or curing hereditary diseases or diathesis will be reduced to a minimum.

The relation between chemical constitution of compounds and their varied physiological and therapeutic properties, though at present consisting mostly of a jumble of empirical facts may one day lead to generalization of vast importance. Therapeutics is moving to-day from merely qualitative to quantitative foundations. Some of you may live to see that remarkable results may be attained by chemistry in the treatment of diseases like tuberculosis or cancer for which chemical therapeutics has at the present day only a limited application in gold or selenium and lead respectively. Crystalline insulin free from impurities is now available. Newer treatments of epilepsy, of myasthenia gravis and of agranulocytic angina are coming in the field due to the triumphs of chemistry. You may see the synthesis of other and newer vitamins and internal secretions as well as extracts from different organs of the body synthesized or isolated in a pure state and used in medicine for the treatment of disease. We look forward to the day when endocrine preparations will be available for oral administration and the dread of the needle averted.

With regard to the contribution of physics to medical science its application is partly for the purpose of diagnosis of diseases and partly for their treatment. Further, physics is slowly evolving new conception of living matter by X-ray analysis, by im-

proved methods of microscopy and by the advancing knowledge of the constitution of matter.

The Electro-cardiograph is a valuable apparatus for studying certain diseases of the heart. A portable apparatus which can be taken to the patient's house and which is constructed on the principle of the string galvanometer is now available. Another portable Electro-cardiograph based on the principle of the valve-amplifier is also available.

The Electro-cardiograph has shown that tracings taken of patients dying of various maladies can demonstrate that for some time after clinical death, some cardiac activity could be registered, the duration varying from six to twenty minutes. These observations show that in cases in which there is cardiac stand-still during anaesthesia or in the new born, resuscitation may be effected by timely cardiac injection or needle puncture. There may be other conditions that may be discovered in future in which the same may be possible.

X-ray methods of analysis may be applied one day in the study of the cancer cell and it is hoped that its application may increase our knowledge of cell construction and cell growth, which helped by our future knowledge of the colloidal state in living cells may one day strengthen our powers in combating the dreadful scourge of the malignant disease. The changes that take place in the tissues in cancer and other pathogenic conditions have been studied by this method by Clark and co-workers.

X-ray diagnosis has improved in the present day to an almost spectacular extent; and radiation therapy has now established its claim to an important place in the treatment of malignant disease. X-ray and radium therapy is bidding fair to displace the knife in the treatment of certain forms of cancer. The response of tumours to radiation demands wide study, each type of tumour having a different response, both clinically and histologically. By contrasting the sensitivity of growths with that of skin—in both cases using the minimum lethal dose as the standard—it has been possible to place tumours in different groups—radio-sensitive tumours, epitheliomata, adenocarcinomata and radio-resistant tumours.

When we survey the immense development in the use of light waves, visible, ultra-violet, X-rays, and others in the investigation of structures and the treatment of disease, with their future potentialities, it may be said without conceit—truly we are beginning to see through a glass less darkly.

Mental disease, before the advent of psychology in medicine, was a *terra incognita*. Recent researches in psychology have thrown a flood of light on the domain of psychiatry. The significance of a mental approach to the problems of psychology had long been misunderstood, but to-day not only we have a better understanding of mental diseases by means of psychological method but also we get extremely encouraging results in the treatment of such disorders.

To-day a firm alliance has been concluded between medicine and psychology, and medical men have more and more fully recognized the necessity of studying the mental history of their patients. Much work has been done in the study of the unconscious in many institutions, notably, the Nancy School. The aftermath of the great war was seen in many cases of nervous debility which are treated in famous clinics, e.g., of Hadfield and others. The power of the instincts and the inhibition of the latent forces, of their release, as well as the phenomena of fatigue, have been thoroughly studied to the great advantage of medical practice and efficiency. Modern psychologists and medical men are paying more and more attention to that aspect of psychological investigation of the body-mind known as sublimation of instincts and emotions. Many medical men at the present day devote themselves as specialists to the practice of psycho-therapy.

Thus the various sciences can be of great service to Medicine. Some of them have contributed very substantially to the relief of human suffering from disease. They can obtain valuable findings for the clinician in deceased conditions which may be helpful to him, but the responsibility finally rests with him as to how to act upon their findings. This shows the great importance of what is called to-day Clinical Science. Anatomy, the science of structure of the body, physiology, the science of function and the meeting ground of physics and chemistry in their application to problems of health and disease and bio-chemistry, the science concerned with the chemical processes underlying the activities of living matter, can be of great service to the clinician. In recent times, the need for increased application of physics and chemistry to medicine has grown with tremendous rapidity.

The contribution of medicine to civilization aided by the other sciences is great. A healthy body means a healthy mind and such minds are less likely to cause

internal and external strife. There is no doubt that a large part of the greatly increased comfort and safety that we enjoy to-day is the result of the phenomenal advance that have been made in the medical sciences in recent times.

The body-mind of man is the finest product of the universe even when compared with the most magnificent of the stars and the nebulae. Man's appearance cannot be regarded purposeless or accidental or as a sign of disease. He has discovered the laws of motion and of relativity as well as of radio-telegraphy, radio-telephony, aviation and television. He unfolds the constitution of the stars and the nebulae, millions and millions of miles away from the earth. He calculates the weight and temperature of the stars and determines their ages. He finds out the constitution of the atoms and discovers the cosmic rays. He smashes the atoms and produces new radio-active elements. He transforms one element into another. He may, one day, be able to determine the mathematics of the atom by means of his calculator. He tries to find out when and how primordial life came into existence. He tells the story of the oldest man who existed in the earth a million years ago, and gives the history of his evolution. He discovers the chromosomes and finds out the structures that are responsible for heredity. He discovers and dissects the micro-organisms of disease, and finds the defensive mechanism against their attacks. He studies the specific carbohydrates and proteins, and tries to discover the structure of the viruses and the bacteriophage. He discovers the treatment of diseases once considered incurable. He records the electric changes of the brain cortex of man in various cerebral states, and may one day record human thoughts on a sensitive plate. He studies the endocrine glands, and synthesizes their secretions. He may one day be able to influence the sex of the embryo at his will. He cultures the organs of the body and studies their growth in vitro. Ponce de Leon did not perhaps search for the impossible and unattainable when he sought the fountain of eternal youth, for man one day will conquer old age, disease and death. Though I dare not say what the 'final secret' is likely to be yet the bodymind of man must be to-day the consummation of the work of the Great Design. In this most complicated machine in which, it may be said, 'matter, life and mind translate roughly into organisation, organism and organiser (Smuts)' Medicine tries to give the healing balm to act as a powerful agent for the maintenance of harmony and strength when disease sets in.

### Second Day Indore— 4th January 1936

#### DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Sectional meetings relating to Agricultural, Medical and Psychological sections were delivered to-day.

Mr. A. K. Yegnanarayana Aiyar, who presided over the Agricultural section, spoke on "Some aspects of scientific research as applied to Indian Agriculture". In the course of his address, he said :

One of the peculiar features of agricultural research has been the test by which its success is generally measured viz., the extent to which results of immediate practical value and application are attained and adopted by the agriculturists of the country. The test is bound to become more severe as the years go by under the new form of Government. But the record of the past 25 years is one of signal success both for research and propaganda more than justifying the expenditure on the various Departments of Agriculture and certainly encourages us to hope that in the future as in the past agricultural research can fully meet the test. The instance of Mysore is given in illustration, where improvements have taken place on an extensive scale. Improved ploughs, threshing appliances, sugarcane mills and pumping installations have largely displaced the traditional methods. Oilcakes and artificial manures have come into general use ; new crops, new and improved varieties of groundnut, ragi, paddy, cotton and sugarcane are grown on thousands of acres ; spraying against arccanut and coffee diseases have been extensively taken up ; the prickly pear has been exterminated ; inoculation of cattle against diseases made thoroughly popular ; serum and vaccines are manufactured locally and mortality from the deadly disease—Hinderpest—effectively kept down.

Encouraging as these results are, progress can be greatly speeded up if profitable and ready markets for produce can be assured preferably by means of local manufacturing industries which will furnish an outlet for these crops. This is strikingly demonstrated by the improvements which have taken place in the cultivation of sugarcane for the new factory at Mandya in the Mysore State, where the use of improved ploughs, artificial manures, growing of improved varieties of sugarcane and its

cultivation by social methods have all come into vogue within less than a year in contrast with the period of several years which they have taken elsewhere in the absence of such stimulus. A measure of all-round prosperity has also been ascribed in as the result of this ready outlet for all the cane grown by the ryots which ensures well for other improvements. The development of the cultivation of Cigarette Tobacco in the Madras Presidency has led to similar results in that part of the country, as like-wise the making of casein for the dairy farmers in parts of Bombay. The organisation of special Committees on the lines of the Indian Central Cotton Committee which will comprise growers, scientific workers, manufacturers and traders in respect of each important crop or group of crops in India is likely to lead efficiently not only to a solution of the many problems of crop improvement, but also to an exploration of their commercial utilisation by local manufacturing industries and to the kind of progress illustrated by the sugar industry described above.

The sugar industry has brought into prominence the question of the utilisation of molasses in a manner profitable to the industry and beneficial to agriculture. The manufacture of alcohol of all grades including absolute alcohol for use for various industrial purposes offers great promise and Mysore has already made a beginning which is worthy of all the support which the Government can give. Among its other uses, the making of cattle feed mixtures offers almost unlimited scope and will meet one of the crying needs of Indian Agriculture. Experiments in the making of products like molasses with the addition of bagasse dust, groundnut shells and hainims or shredded straw are suggested as promising methods of utilisation.

The utilisation of bye-products, which are at present mere waste products in respect of other crops also is a subject which needs greater attention, if only as a means of making the cultivation of these crops more profitable, leaving aside the question of industrial advantages. Arecanut husks, plantain stems, groundnut husks, paddy husk, cotton stalks, coffee pulp, are some of the materials that come in this category and the methods of one kind or another which have from time to time been suggested may with advantage be examined and work on alternative methods also undertaken for investigation.

The subject of 'Quality' in crops and the possibility of improving it by methods of manuring deserves to be taken up without further delay. So far all manual experiments have had for their object only an increase in the 'Quantity' of the produce concerned and little or no attention has been paid to the effect on the composition of the commodity. Many factors to which the economic value of a crop is due such as the sugar in sugarcane, oil content in oil-seeds, starch in the potato, the burning quality and nicotine content of tobacco, staple in cotton, 'Quality' in rice, protein in wheat, keeping quality in fruits etc., are already known in a general way to be affected by soil constituents and manuring, but the matter has not so far formed the subject of serious investigation. What really constitutes 'Quality' in many crops like rice, or coffee for example, and to what constituent or constituents such 'Quality' is due will have also to be gone into as a preliminary, but in respect of sugar, starch, oil, proteins and known essential principles to which the other crops mentioned owe their quality, this difficulty does not exist and the problem is less complicated. So far the performance at the weigh bridge alone has been the test of the action of manures and judged by this test many a manual experiment has yielded results either contradictory or inconclusive. It is not at all unlikely that if attention should be directed to the composition of the crop as well these experiments will tell a different and a very valuable tale.

The effect of soil constituents sometimes called catalysts, including even the rare elements is also worthy of study, as in addition to their reported increase of yields, it is possible that connection may be traced between them and some of the baffling plant diseases put down now to physiological disturbances, viruses and so on, much in the manner of the subtle effect of vitamins in the animal body. As a practical need of immediate importance is a strengthening of the staff for the investigation of plant diseases and pests and increased attention devoted to their investigation. The loss due to these in the aggregate is stupendous and for most of them cheap and simple remedies are extraordinarily difficult to suggest. Many, indeed, are most baffling and the problem is really one for more than one branch of science. A many-sided attack from the mycological, Entomological, Chemical, Botanical and agronomical sides has to be organised in regard to these with provision for proper co-ordination and co-operation. Among pests that have assumed special importance recently is the borer pest on sugarcane, which is a serious menace to the sugar industry. A large scale campaign of parasitic control is indicated as about the most feasible



while the action of light of different kinds of irradiation and the newly patented Xoray light traps need to be tested extensively.

In the field of cattle improvement work has been somewhat halting and tentative owing to the conflict of views regarding methods, whether it should be by crossing with foreign breeds or by selection from local breeds. Matters, such as adequate fodder supplies and their conservation, the problem of the dead load of useless cattle have added to the difficulties. But, on the other hand, we are bringing diseases under control, popularising the castration of scrub bulls and the keeping of proper stud bulls and are thus removing some of the old obstacles; while the large demand for milk due to the growth of cities is acting as a powerful stimulus to cattle improvement. Conditions are thus favourable for some marked progress in the near future.

Among the many economic factors, which set effective limits to the spread of improvements is the lack of proper marketing organisations. The creation of the new department for agricultural marketing is, therefore, welcomed as a powerful ally to the scientific worker in his attempts to increase the profits of farming. Lines of work which will benefit the country as a whole, both grower and merchant alike, as the result of the present marketing surveys are indicated. The opinion that science has led to over-production and the present depression in agriculture is strongly controverted. As long as there are millions of people, who though able and willing to work have still to remain ill-fed and ill-clad, it is useless to talk of over-production or superfluity. What Indian agriculture wants on the other hand, is science and still more science to rescue it from the ills that beset it on all sides.

#### PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Mr. J. M. Sen delivered the presidential address at the meeting of the Psychological section. In the course of his address he said :

In all problems of education, two things, he said, were of fundamental importance, one was the child who was to be educated and the other the environment in which he grew up. But both were variables; no one could fully predict what a child was going to be, nor was it impossible to change the environment to a certain extent. Education was therefore a function of two real variables. No mathematician could, however, lay down any precise formula governing the relationship of these two variables.

All human beings, he continued, came into this world with certain possibilities and limitations. These must be regarded as things given to the child. The child began life as a sort of field of operations for two forces that sometimes worked in harmony, but frequently opposed each other; these forces were known as heredity and environment. Heredity was generally accepted as an ordinary principle of life. For the teacher, the problem of heredity was an enquiry into the question of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, viz., "Does the child inherit from his parents qualities that they have acquired for themselves during their life-time?" In education, the teachers were liable to the fallacy of apparent transmission. Characteristics acquired by the father might appear among the children not because they were transmitted but because they were again acquired by the children.

It was perfectly true that the children of parents who had received some education themselves could be taught more easily than the children of those who had not the opportunity of receiving any education. But all the same, the former group would have to be educated in almost the same way as the latter group. Hence it could be asserted that educability could be admitted but the results of education could not be transmitted. From the point of view of practical teacher the influence of the environment was the most important factor. The pupils' qualities must be taken as they were given. But in the matter of environment, the teacher could certainly manipulate it in such a way as to produce a definite effect upon the pupil.

The intelligence of an individual, he continued, increased (though differently in different individuals) from birth to sixteen or eighteen years of age and thereafter remained constant. This statement assumed a prominent position in regard to his education. Most part of this period he was at school and the teacher could help him in increasing not merely the pupil's knowledge but his native intelligence as well. It was therefore of utmost importance that the conditions of the school atmosphere should be such that it could help in increasing the Intelligence Quotient of each and every individual. The classification of pupils according to mental age therefore was a condition precedent to good teaching in class-rooms. With the growth of education in India, this problem was assuming a position of great importance in the administra-

tion of education by governments and local bodies. Mr. Sen then discussed about the various problems concerning the science and art of measurement in education.

Mr. Sen then discussed the problems concerning general intelligence tests, memory tests, ability tests, vocational tests (i. e. tests for determining skill for a particular vocation in life) in schools and colleges. But he said that these did not cover all types of pupils. There were patient plodders in all walks of life and it was worth while finding them out while they were in educational institutions. By means of a series of tests, Dr. E. Webb had determined that there was a second central factor in life known as "The persistence of motives" (denoted by "W"). Even this could not explain all cases. Mr. Maxwell Garnett had brought to light a third independent factor, viz., "originality or cleverness" (denoted by "C"). High values of "C" characterized men of genius and first-rate artists, poets and scientists. These fascinating researches enabled them to determine "the promise and potency of the individual so far as these depend on his endowment." These, however, proved that there could not be any clashing of interests of individual pupils in class-room and out side. All three factors 'G', 'W' and 'C' could not be identical even in two cases, not to speak of three or more cases. Hence it was necessary to develop the potentialities of a pupil during his school age by creating for him an atmosphere of study and character congenial to all and not inimical to the best interest of the society as a whole.

#### IMMUNITY AGAINST DISEASES

*Lt.-Col. H. E. Shortt*, who presided over the Medical section, spoke on "Immunity in protozoal diseases". The following is a summary of his address :—

It is a well known fact that after the attacks of many diseases caused by bacteria, such as enteric, and also after diseases caused by filterable viruses, such as small-pox and yellow fever, the individual affected is immune to further attack for a long period, possibly for the rest of his life.

It is only exceptionally that this happens after diseases caused by protozoa, such as malaria. In this case, the person affected seems to have no subsequent immunity and is liable to repeated attacks of the disease.

These facts would make it appear that the bodily mechanisms responsible for the production of immunity were acting differently in the two cases but evidence is brought forward to show that this difference is only apparent and that the probability is that the mechanisms concerned in immunity are the same whatever the invading organism may be.

A description is given of the course of events when animals are infected with various species of pathogenic and non-pathogenic trypanosomes and how immunity against these is sometimes attained and sometimes fails entirely to come into action.

A consideration, on general lines, of the various phenomena of immunity involved in the reactions between an invaded animal and the invading parasite lead to fascinating speculations as to how these mechanisms of immunity arose, why they appear to be so perfect in the case of some disease and so apparently ineffective in others.

These speculations are applied especially to the case of man and malaria. Why, when man has been exposed to malaria for hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of years, he has not acquired a greater immunity?

It is suggested that, had man remained, as regards his social habits, in the primitive conditions obtaining when he was at the evolutionary level of the anthropoid apes, he would have acquired an efficient immunity against the local strains of malaria parasite. Man, however, decided to live in large communal aggregations and to wander far and wide in the world in the search for food. Each rung on the social ladder took him farther from the primitive conditions of his evolutionary ancestors and their possible immunity to the bad effects of malaria so that he finally achieved the sometimes questionable benefits of civilisation at the expense of relatively ineffective immunity to malaria.

#### EMBRYOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

*Prof. H. K. Mookherjee* of the Calcutta University, presiding over the Zoology Section meeting, in the course of his address dwelt on "The development of the vertebral column and its bearing on the study of organic evolution." The address was illustrated by diagrams of the vertebral column (or back-bone) and photomicrographs of sections of the vertebrae of fishes, frogs, lizards, snakes, birds, moles, etc.

Contrary to the opinion of the late Prof. Gadow and other embryologists, Prof. Mookerjee considered that all vertebrates followed the same course of development and exhibited a gradual evolution from one end of the series to the other. Each vertebra, he said, was composed of a centrum or body, an upper arch, and in some cases, a lower arch also. The centrum was formed from the perichordal tube which was converted into bony ring, distinct from the notochordal sheaths. The arches did not take part in the formation of the centrum as supposed by the previous workers. The perichordal tube was cut into pieces corresponding to vertebrae, by strands of migratory connective tissue cells. Various types of vertebrae were formed according to the direction followed by these migratory cells while passing within the tube. The course of the migratory cells, was, in turn, influenced by the movement of the embryo. The above explanation as to the cause of formation of different types of vertebrae was not given by previous authors. Prof. Mookerjee showed that the upper or neural arch which protected the spinal cord was composed of cartilaginous arches known as basidorsalis and connective tissue or membrane bone arches. The latter were not noted by previous authors. The lower arch was similarly formed. He also shewed how some vertebrate species deviated from the above fundamental plan of development as a result of adaptation. He traced the ossification and formation of articulating processes and ribs. He was of the opinion that the classification of vertebrae given by the late Prof. Gadow was untenable. He pointed out that the results of embryological studies were of great value to the evolutionists inasmuch as the lines of descent could be traced by following the developmental history, where anatomy or palaeontology failed to give a clue. Comparative embryology probed deeper into the mysteries of life and opened new fields of investigation on the embryonic life of animals.

#### BIOCYCLE TERPENES

Dr. P. C. Guha, President of the Chemistry section in his address dealt with recent developments in the chemistry of bicyclic terpenes.

The bicyclic terpenes occur mostly in essential oils, like turpentine oil, camphor oil, etc., good many of them being known also through synthesis and Dr. Guha's address pertains to the discussion of the recent developments in this field. Amongst subjects that have tackled the ingenuity, experimental skills and imagination of chemists, bicyclic terpenes occupy a very high position. The uses to which these and allied compounds have been put are many and varied, and consequently they are of great industrial importance. The enthusiastic chemist to whom the joy in work is of greater importance than the ultimate material gain, finds in them substances of inexhaustible sources of fruitful experimental results. It being well known that the synthetic experiments of the pure chemist have proved to be the stepping stone to a large number of successful industrial developments, there cannot be any question of conflict between these two aspects of chemistry.

One finds that India has been singularly lagging behind in work on this particular subject while Germany, England and America have made and still continue to make signal contributions. The difficult nature of the problem rendered all the more difficult by the astonishingly rapid contributions by master-minds should not deter one in taking up research in this line.

The address which is highly academic and rather technical in its nature, describes the salient features of bicyclic ring systems as a class—occurring naturally or otherwise and their stereochemical aspect. The more important and recent advances in synthetic and degradative work alike, in Thujane, Carane, Pinane, Camphane-Fenchane, and Santane series of compounds are described. The theoretical aspects of two different peculiar phenomena exhibited by some of these compounds discovered by Wagner and Nametkin are discussed. The physiological activity of some compounds of this group in relation to their chemical constitution also finds a brief mention in the text. Problems still awaiting solution are discerned and methods of attack likely to be attended with success are pointed out. The results that have attended the experiments at the Indian Institute of Science are described in appropriate places in the body of the text. The address may be expected to give an additional stimulus to attract more workers in India to this very important branch of organic chemistry.

#### MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY

Dr. W. Burridge, President of the Physiology Section, in the course of his address on "Some future lines of advance in Medical Philosophy," said:—

To see a muscle, which has been cut out of the body and lies inert and apparently lifeless, suddenly spring into activity when an electric current is passed through it, is to witness what has fascinated doctors for over a century. They saw in this the promise of solution of their fundamental problems. How does living substance react to its surrounding? What events take place when light, say, enters an eye to set up from its sensitive nerve-endings those nerve impulses which provide seeing after they reach the brain? Or what takes place in the nerve-cells of the brain when we think? To all such problems that apparently lifeless muscle, galvanised once again to active life, seemed able to supply the key.

When messages are sent from the brain along the nerves to set muscles in action, those muscles are said to be stimulated to activity. Similarly, light stimulates sensitive nerves in our eyes to give us vision, and the contact of objects with our skin stimulates its nerves to give us the sense of touch. A knowledge of the underlying nature of these stimulations is of the utmost importance to medical science because all its ideas or theories concerning how living organs do their work are ultimately based on the beliefs concerning what this is.

Now, doctors have firmly believed that the action of electric currents on a muscle which has been cut out of the body is essentially the same as the natural stimulation of living organs which takes place when light, say, stimulates sensations through the eye. Acting on this belief, numberless experiments have been performed on muscles with electricity to gain insight into the nature of natural stimulation.

The difference between the old and new medical ideas can be exemplified from petrol motors. For years, medical scientists in laboratories all over the world have been studying through muscles and electric currents a process that plays in organs of our bodies the same part that gas-sparking plays in a motor. They have investigated, as it were, the best type of sparking plug, the proper spark-gap, the time taken to explode the mixture, the rate at which the explosion travels in the cylinders, and so on. The motors on which they did their experiments, however, lacked throttles to vary the mixture, had hand-operated sparks, and stopped dead after each explosion.

Of the imperfections of their motors, they had no suspicion; instead, they firmly believed that there was nothing more to be learnt about motors generally than what they could learn from their own machines which give them the further idea that the running of a motor depended entirely on the spark.

The New Psychology is a welter of doctrines of new medical sects who have released themselves from the bonds of age-long tradition in which orthodox medicine is still held through holding fast to what are now demonstrably wrong beliefs concerning electric currents and muscle. Until these new discoveries had been made, however, it could be held doubtful whether the New Psychology was an advance of science or merely an excursion into the wilderness. The evidence now available shows that it was an advance, but of empirical type.

Until recently, then, necessary knowledge of the condition of living matter was lacking. In the absence of this knowledge doctrines have been built on a foundation presumption that living matter remains inert until excited to action by some external agency. The new facts show instead that this living matter is ever active, and that external agents do not initiate activity in it but many modify an activity already present. The ultimate difference between the two conceptions is as great as the difference between Creation and Evolution, because any explanation that is given of the behaviour of a living organ must accord with the conception of its fundamental inertness or activity. An explanation based on inertness must differ radically from one based on activity. If then there be this activity where previously inertness was presupposed, every explanation must change, and that means a new science.

#### RACIAL CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN PEOPLES

"Problems of racial classification of the Indian peoples" was the subject of the address, delivered on the 8th. January by Mr. H. C. Chakladar, who presided over the meeting of the Anthropology section. In the course of his address, Mr. Chakladar said:

In India racial classification has so long proceeded on very scanty anthropometric data, and hence it has been quite unsatisfactory. Risley initiated anthropomorphic measurements in India, but the data obtained by him supplemented by those collected by others, are quite inadequate for such a vast country as India, especially as the Indian peoples are divided into innumerable independent groups that do not intermarry. Risley's classification of the Indian peoples, based upon this inadequate material, into seven racial types, has rightly been rejected by anthropologists. Ris-

ley gave, for example, the racial designation of Mongolo-Dravidian to the peoples of Bengal and Orissa, though they are not marked by Mongoloid features at all. Then again Risley's Dravidians fall at least into four racial types: (1) the dark, long-headed, wide-nosed type which has been given the unsatisfactory designation of 'Pre-Dravidian' by some and which has been called 'Proto-Australoid' by Dr. Hutton in the last census report of India although craniological measurements have shown clearly that the theory of a common racial stock for the jungle tribes of the Deccan and the aborigines of Australia is quite untenable; this type had better be called simply Vedalic. Hutton's theory of its migration from Asia Minor is also disproved by the great difference in the nasal index between the ancient Mesopotamian and Indian skulls; (2) the Mundakol group of Chota Nagpur which possesses a considerable affinity with the former, but has points of difference also; (3) the long-headed, fine-nosed type speaking Dravidian languages who on account of their Mediterranean affinity, had best be called 'Indo-Mediterranean', independently of any reference to the language they speak; (4) and lastly, the round-headed, fine-nosed type with Alpine affinity which claims numerous individuals amongst the Dravidian-speakers. The two latter types are not peculiar to the Dravidian-speaking area alone, but are of a much wider distribution in India. Intensive anthropometric work involving 60 measurements and 31 somatoscopic observations on each individual among the people of Bengal by the author, shows the presence, both among the high castes, such as the Radhi Brahmans, as well as the low castes like the Muchis, of a predominant round-headed type, and also of an appreciable number of Indo-Mediterranean type, this latter type being more numerous among the lower castes than among the higher. Anthropometric investigations in other parts of India would probably show a very wide distribution of these two types. Both of them are represented in the skulls excavated at Mohenjo Daro, and they appear to have been the earliest importers of advanced civilisation and culture into India.

The speakers of Aryan language are represented by two groups in India, one, the round-headed type and the other, a tall and long-headed type which has been called *Proto-Nordic*, and the dialect spoken by the two groups belong to two distinct branches of the same Aryan tongue. The present distribution of the round-heads in India in the marginal areas in the west, south and east, as also their presence at Adichanallur, shows that they must have entered the country earlier than the *Proto-Nordics*. As such they must have initiated the Vedic culture in India which the tall, long-heads, arriving later, absorbed from them. The Vedic culture was carried, even in the Rigvedic age, by long-haired, brown-robed Munis—pioneer missionaries of the Vedic religion—over a great part of India, from the Western to the Eastern Ocean, as the Rigveda (X. 136) puts it. The Brahmana portion of the Vedas speak of mighty empires established by the Vedic Aryans in eastern India. The charge of impurity brought against the peoples of Sind, Gujarat and Konkom in the west and Bengal and Orissa in the east, belongs to a much later literature, and is due to their trade and intercourse with foreigners by land and sea: this the purists in the midland where the latter Vedic literature flourished, condemned in severe terms, and prescribed the most distressful penances for them in the midland itself where the people were getting fossilized in their habits and customs with a narrow outlook towards life, and they began to think that the habitation of the pure Aryans was confined within very narrow limits—between the Ganges and the Jamuna. But the presence of tribes at a low stage of culture, but resembling the Indo-Aryans in their physical features over the wild area from the borders of Assam to the hills of Annam, amply proves that people with Indo-European features had traversed the whole of northern India from the western gates to the eastern frontier and passed through the forests and hills beyond, even up to the Pacific in every early times.

No sound and definite conclusions, however, about the racial composition of the Indian peoples, are possible without further anthropological material and therefore extensive measurements should be taken in all parts of India, preferably by local investigators with an efficient training in anthropological method, and possessing a knowledge of the language of the people among whom they work. In England, an appeal has recently been issued 'to set on foot a comprehensive survey of the past and present populations of Great Britain; the need for such a movement in India is much more urgent, as the anthropological work so far done is of the nature of a preliminary survey only.

#### BOTANICAL SECTION MEETING

Dr. S. R. Bose, who presided over the meeting of the Botanical section on the

7th. January, dwelt in the course of his address, on the various aspects of Bengal 'Polyporaceae' which he studied in the course of the last twenty years. He dealt with the geographical distribution of Bengal Polyporaceae, the conditions for their development in Bengal, the fossil records of Polyporaceae, cytology of reproduction and the chemical nature of fruit body of '*Ganoderma lucidum*', their physiology and other uses.

When climatic conditions such as temperature, rainfall, humidity, etc., were analogous, he said, it was astonishing to find the repetition of the species in very distant parts of the globe. Recently in 1935 he recorded the occurrence in the high hills of Looza (Assam) in Bengal 8,000 to 10,000 feet elevation of six European Polypores (*P. squamosus*, *P. Sulphureus*, *P. gilvus* formalicoides, *Fomes fomentarius*, *F. pinicola*, *Amarodarma rugosus*), never found in the plains of Bengal. This was probably because most of the plants of the high hills harbouring these species of Polypores as parasites or saprophytes did not grow in the plains.

Dr. Bose opined that for the establishment of stable classification of Polyporaceae morphological studies should be supplemented by detailed study of anatomical, cytological, chemical, physiological and biological, chemical and other characters, and that the old classification, however imperfect, should not be changed till they had accumulated data from the completed study of these diverse aspects of Polyporaceae.

The chemical analysis of the fruit body of *Ganoderma lucidum* with a strongly lacinate upper surface, he said, showed that it contained resin, ergosterin, fatty acids, mannite, some polyaccharides and a voluminous deep-brown amorphous substance much resembling humus acid. The biological peculiarities of Polypore showed that as saprophytes or parasites some species grew singly on logs or trunks and branches of forest trees, while others had a gregarious habit. The decays in wood according to the gross characters of the rot were known as white rots and brown rots, depending on the colour, in the former case the wood became lighter in colour and in the latter it acquired a dark-brown or reddish tinge. As soon as rain appeared, they set forth an advancing zone which was quite marked off from the old zone. Some Polypores began their lives as saprophytes attacking dead roots, stumps and branches, they then extended their hyphae round the living cells in the adjoining portion and thus became converted into parasites. Others began their lives as parasites, their spores usually entering through a wound, then they killed the living portion and finally established themselves as saprophytes with a number of sporophores on dead parts of the plants. In extreme cases the whole central cylinder (heart wood) was destroyed, converting the tree into hollow structure. Some, again, rarely continued their activity after the tree had been cut and converted into timber.

Interesting studies, he added, on spore-discharge from dried fruit-bodies of Polypores had been carried out. They showed that only those that had basidia revived under the moist condition and shed spores after varying period of desiccation (weeks, months or years). Specimens without basidia never shed spores. Brown and coloured Polypores did not survive desiccation long, when detached from the host; they had spores only for a short time in the fresh condition. In specimens of '*Ganoderma lucidum*' and '*Ganoderma applanatum*' the basidia were succeeded after the rains by hyphae projecting direct from the trama and bearing secondary spores at their tips, which are undistinguishable from the ordinary basidio spores in any way; probably these carried on spore-discharge in the dry season. It was a matter for future investigation whether basidia themselves were transformed into such tramal hyphae projections in the dry intervals. Complete life-history studies of about a dozen local Polypores from spore-germination to the final fructifying stage were carried out, and the details were published in the Journal of Linnean Society in 1930.

Continuing, Dr. Bose said that recent studies on the determination of sexual relations of Polypores by means of monosporous cultures showed that most of them were heterothallic and potentially bisexual. This theory of potential bisexuality first put forward by Ames in 1929, seemed to cover most of the facts in various groups of fungi, though in two local Polypores the author had shown two sexes were of a comparatively stable character and not easily interchangeable according to the varying conditions as was the case with various groups of lower fungi examined by different workers from time to time.

# The Calcutta University Convocation

The following is the full text of the Convocation address delivered by Mr. *Syama Prasad Mukherjee*, the Vice-Chancellor, at the Calcutta University Convocation held on the 22nd. February 1936 :—

Your Excellency, Fellow-Graduates, Ladies and Gentlemen :

In accordance with time-honoured usages, it is now my privilege to address the Convocation, and to accord to you all a sincere welcome on behalf of the University. I specially offer my congratulations and best wishes to the graduates who are assembled here and who have just been admitted to their respective degrees.

During the year under review we had to mourn the death of several distinguished members and scholars, all devoted to the welfare of the University. Before I pay my tribute of respect to their memory, let me first record at this Convocation our profound sense of sorrow at the sudden demise of His Majesty King George V. At a special meeting of the Senate, the University has already expressed its deep sympathy with the Royal Family and has conveyed to His Majesty King Edward VIII its loyalty and devotion on his accession to the throne.

Among members of the Senate and teachers, we mourn the loss of two great Islamic scholars, two life-long friends and colleagues, both imbued with courage and imagination, Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy and Aga Mahomed Kazim Shirazi; of a former Vice-Chancellor, the first non-official to hold this office, a man of wide interests and an upholder of the best traditions of the University, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary; of an eminent medical practitioner and a friend of the poor, Dr. Jatindra Nath Maitra; and of a pioneer of the movement for the physical regeneration of our youths, Captain Jitendra Nath Banerjee. The departments of the Law, Mathematics and Sanskrit have been left distinctly the poorer by the death of three of our erudite teachers, Mr. Jyoti Prasad Sarvadhikary, Professor Ganesh Prasad and Professor Prabhat Chandra Chakravarti, the last being cut off in the prime of his life and in the midst of valuable work. In Rai Bahadur Narendranath Sen we have lost one of our devoted officers who, by dint of merit, rose from a subordinate position to an office of great trust and responsibility. We lament also the death of two distinguished European scholars, Dr. Sylvan Levi and Sir John Woodroffe, both of whom were ardent well-wishers of the province and genuinely devoted to Indian culture and civilization, which by their life-long researches they raised in the estimation of the world.

It is customary for the Vice-Chancellor to review on this occasion the work of the University during the preceding year. So varied and numerous, however, have been the questions which have engaged our attention that I can only mention some of our important activities.

Last year I referred to the momentous changes made in connection with the Matriculation Examination, giving the vernacular language its rightful place in our scheme of studies. The regulations have since been approved by Government and I take this opportunity of thanking its representatives, particularly my friend, the Minister of Education, without whose energetic support they would not have been sanctioned even fourteen years after they were first formulated by the University. The task of collecting materials for the systematic preparation of text-books in Bengali in various subjects of study, specially in Science, has been successfully continued during the year by a number of scholars whose unselfish labours deserve our best thanks. Our experts are also exploring the possibilities of a standardised form of spelling in Bengali. The principles on which we desire to proceed and the difficulties that await solution have been stated in the form of a questionnaire and we have invited the criticisms of scholars and writers from all parts of the province. The Syndicate will now take steps for the preparation and selection of text-books which should be available towards the end of the year.

I referred last year to the urgent need for the supply of a large number of trained teachers for high schools. We have since made provision for short course of study in the University for the training of teachers. Out of 15,000 teachers in our schools only about 2,000 are trained and we realise what we have been able to do is hardly adequate. A beginning has however been made and, through the new department of

Teaching, we expect to be able to acquaint ourselves at first hand with many problems of secondary education, specially the difficulties under which the teachers perform their duties.

The new Library Hall has been completed and it now provides our teachers and students with increased facilities for work. We are remodelling the library and revising the system of cataloguing books so as to increase its usefulness and efficiency.

We have partially reorganised the Biological laboratories, but these need further development. We have transferred to Ballygunge the department of Anthropology, a subject which is now also included in the syllabus for the intermediate examination. The work of constructing a new building for the department of Applied Chemistry and for providing increased accommodation for the department of Applied Physics is now in progress and the extended laboratories will be in full working order in less than six months. We are anxiously exploring the possibilities of expanding the activities of the Science College so that it may not only be an active centre of higher teaching and research but also a potent influence in raising the standard of work done in the affiliated institutions and in providing new courses of studies leading to industrial careers.

In the department of Applied Physics we have made provision for the study of communication engineering. We expect this will open a new avenue of employment for our trained youths. This activity of ours has already received the sympathetic attention of possible donors and I have every hope that within the next few months we shall be favoured with a special endowment for the equipment of this department. From Applied Physics let me turn for a moment to Chinese and Tibetan studies. The Consul-General of China has kindly offered us the honorary services of a teacher in Chinese and we have appointed a special instructor in Tibetan. A competent staff is now engaged in carrying on research in these subjects which will throw light on many a dark corner of ancient Indian civilization. The money we are spending on it may not be productive in any material sense, but it is expected to yield results of great academic and cultural importance.

The University has steadily carried on its duty of publication of the research activities of both teachers and advanced students. Some of them have attracted notice from different parts of the world and have been acclaimed as works of solid value. These publications and other contributions in numerous journals and bulletins of learned societies throughout the world testify to the spirit of investigation which the University has awakened in its alumni, a spirit which alone can keep the University alive and make it grow as an active centre of learning.

That such activities are not confined to a particular class of teachers is evident from the fact that this year we have conferred the degree of Doctorate on as many as eight graduates of the University, working in different places. Of these, four are in Arts, two in Science, one in Law and one in Medicine. The various research prizes and scholarships continue to attract a large number of brilliant young men whose investigations cover a wide field of studies. The total number of scholarships and prizes awarded during the year to fellows and advanced students for studies here and abroad amounted to 85 and their consolidated value was about one lac of rupees. Two special scholarships were awarded to two brilliant Bengali lady graduates for advanced studies in education and philosophy in Europe. Another was awarded to a Bengali graduate in aeronautics, who unfortunately met his death at a fatal air tragedy at Dum Dum last year. A special scholarship has been granted to another who has recently returned from Cambridge and is now attached to one of our medical colleges, to enable him to carry on research in epidemic dropsy under Sir Nilratan Sircar. Another scholar was attached to the de Terra Yale-Cambridge expedition, engaged in important work of exploration North-western India.

We have adhered to the policy of inviting distinguished professors and well-known personalities to deliver special lectures for the benefit of our students. To mention a few, and we had amongst us Madam Halide Edib Adnan from Turkey, Prof. Noguchi from Japan, Professor Turner from America, and Dr. Kempers from Germany. Among others who have been similarly invited are Professors Zoltan De Takas from Hungary, Sir Manmathanath Mukherji, our new Tagore Professor, Professor Satyendranath Bose of Dacca and Sir S. Radhakrishnan who will speak on Comparative Religion as Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lecturer. I take this opportunity of congratulating Professor Radhakrishnan on his recent appointment at Oxford which is a fitting tribute to his remarkable scholarship and attainments in the furtherance of which Calcutta played no small part.



A reform of far-reaching importance which the Senate has recently sanctioned relates to the teaching of Science at the Intermediate standard. The Regulations provide that every scientific subject should be taught in colleges, both from the theoretical and practical standpoints. But at the University examination we are not called upon to hold any test in respect of the practical portion. We have now decided to make this provision. We have done so in the full conviction that this will not lead to an improvement of the work done at the Intermediate standard but will also reflect on the quality of teaching at the higher stages.

Another important scheme recently approved by the Senate relates to the creation of a Fine Arts Gallery and Museum mainly in connection with post-graduate studies. It is our desire that the Museum, while it must represent the genius of Indian art, should also lay special stress on the contributions made in this domain by North-Eastern India, specially Bengal. The establishment of the Museum has already evoked the sympathy and support of many an eminent lover of art, official and non-official. I earnestly believe that will help the University in spreading amongst its students that essential knowledge of and respect for Indian culture, manifested through the realm of Indian Art, which has not only a supreme educative value but is also calculated to rouse the patriotic consciousness of our youths.

The building for the University Rowing Club, whose activities received favourable comments from Your Excellency the other day, will be completed within two months and will enable us to respond satisfactorily to the enthusiasm which the club has already evoked from the student community of Calcutta. The University Training Corps deserves our congratulations for the popularity and efficiency it has recently attained, which fill us with hopes for its future. The playground allotted to the University by the Department of Public Instruction this year will be of immense help to us. The activities of our students in games and sports, which have made satisfactory progress during the year, demand co-ordination and further expansion and also call for intensive training. The increased attention paid to the health and physique of our students will stimulate the growth of both body and mind and will endow them with discipline and capacity for corporate work. We must develop the habit of playing the game and remember that in sport, as in life, victory or defeat is not the supreme factor; what is of paramount importance is that in every sphere we must bring into action our best and cleanest efforts, which should be unceasing and unyielding in character.

During the year the University has received donations for specified purposes amounting to Rs. 40,000. To the donors we have already conveyed our grateful thanks. Special mention must here be made of an endowment of Rs. 30,000 created by Mr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, one of our distinguished teachers and now a member of the Senate, for a systematic publication of works of translation in Bengali from well-known treatises in oriental classical languages. This series will be associated with the honoured name of Mr. Isan Chandra Ghosh, the donor's father, whose death the University only recently mourned and whose contributions to the cause of development of Bengali literature have earned for him a permanent place in the affections of his countrymen.

This reference to endowments leads me to make a few observations on the financial position of the University. Our fee-income has increased in recent years. But unfortunately we have not yet been able to arrive at any satisfactory settlement with Government regarding the conditions of the State grant which covers only about 17 per cent of our total expenditure. The Government grant for a particular year is decreased by half of the excess income of the University during the previous year, if it goes beyond the standard figure of Rs. 11,72,000. I must emphasise in this connection that the recurring grant of Rs. 3,60,000 was not intended to include the various projects of reform on which Government and the University were both agreed, neither did it represent our average deficit. It is lamentable that although we have an increased revenue at present, we are not allowed to utilise it fully for improvement and extension and are thus hampered in our activities. During the current year our grant has been reduced by Rs. 1,55,000, only because last year we had a large fee-income. I would state with all the emphasis at my command that if the University is to pursue a progressive policy of reform and expansion, which is regarded as essential for the future welfare of the province both by Government and the people, the least that the State can do is to place the entire grant at our disposal without imposing restrictions and conditions.

Let me now turn to some aspects of our educational policy which has recently been the subject-matter of widespread discussion. A criticism with which we have become familiar in this country is that an alarmingly large number of students is receiving University education, and the Universities are responsible for wastage and unnecessary duplication of teaching arrangements. Let us examine the situation dispassionately and ask ourselves whether the criticism levelled against the Universities in India has any foundation at all.

Let me first take our own University. We serve the needs of Bengal and Assam with the exception of a limited area which is controlled by Dacca. We have thus practically one University for a population of about fifty million in Bengal and nine in Assam. The number of students reading in the Universities and the colleges is about thirty-one thousand and the total expenditure on higher education is eighty-six lacs of rupees, Assam spending about four. Take the whole of British India with a population of two hundred and sixty-three million. India has only sixteen Universities and the number of their students will be about one lac and twenty thousand. The total expenditure on higher education in India is less than four crores of rupees.

Let me now turn to other countries. The British Isles afford a good illustration for comparison from the point of view of population which is about forty-five million; but the number of Universities is as many as sixteen—what we have for the whole of India—and fifty-five thousand students receive instruction under their jurisdiction. About six crores and forty lacs of rupees are spent on higher education only in England and Wales. To universities alone within this area the State annually contributes two crores and twenty-seven lacs of rupees.

Let me take the figures for a British dominion. Canada, which has a population of ten million, has as many as twenty-three Universities and eighty-five thousand students pursue higher education. In Germany the population is sixty-six million with twenty-three Universities which have an enrolment of eighty-eight thousand students. In Italy which has a population of forty-one million, there are twenty-six Universities and fifty thousand students receive higher education. In Japan with a population of sixty-four million there are six Universities and seventy thousand students.

Let me now give some figures for secondary education. In Bengal the number of pupils in different grades of secondary schools is about four lacs and sixty thousand, of whom about three lacs belong to high schools recognised by the University. Assam has, in addition, an enrolment of seventy-seven thousand pupils in secondary schools. For every seventeen who receive secondary education, one proceeds to the higher stage. If we take the whole of India, there are about twenty-four lacs of students in schools, and for every twenty, one goes up to the University stage. But what about other countries? In the British Isles seven lacs of pupils read in secondary schools, and one in every twelve proceeds to higher education. In Canada one in every three joins the University. In Germany the proportion is one to nine; in Italy and in Japan it is one to ten.

The number of candidates at the matriculation examination of our University often disturbs the peace of mind of our critics. May I bring it to their notice that if about twenty-five thousand candidates will appear at our matriculation examination this year, four years ago fifty-seven thousand candidates sat for the Approved First Examination from secondary schools in England and Wales alone—an examination which has been adopted by the universities as a matriculation examination—and seventy-three per cent of them were successful?

Similar illustrations might be given in reference to educational opportunities existing in other civilised countries which allot enormous sums of money to education. We have not heard it stated that the number of students receiving instruction in universities, in colleges and in secondary schools in these countries is by any means excessive or that it displays an unhealthy mental development on the part of the people of these lands. Neither have we heard it stated that the large number of universities and educational institutions existing in each of these countries—which must necessarily make similar provision for teaching and research in many branches of study—are wasting national resources or are guilty of duplication of arrangements. Neither again have we heard any sweeping condemnation of their educational systems on the ground that the vast majority of the students is pursuing education, as indeed they must, not solely out of respect for learning for the sake of learning but also as a means to an end.

While I make these general observations, I do not ignore certain essential factors. I recognise that each country must have its own problems and nowhere is the

educational system considered perfect. I recognise that in each one of these countries there is the amplest provision for elementary education. But surely, if in Bengal or in India primary education to-day is utterly inadequate, the fault does not rest with the university; neither does it stand to reason that the educational opportunities offered at the higher stages should be curtailed or condemned. I do not ignore that in other countries education is of a varied type and affords facilities for the training of youths in diverse branches of knowledge, theoretical and practical. But surely, the remedy for the present state of things in this country would be to make provision for similar kinds of instruction in our schools and colleges and not to complain against the number of students reading in them. I do not ignore that in other countries, apart from the education which thousands of students receive through the medium of the universities, colleges and schools, there are other recognised institutes and bodies through which knowledge is spread for the benefit of the people, both young and old. In our country the number of such institutions is extremely limited. I do not ignore that in many other countries, although general unemployment is a disturbing element in national life, unemployment amongst educated people, though present, is not so distressing as in India. But let us not forget that national interests in those lands have secured among the different authorities—the State, the universities and other educational agencies and representatives of trade, industry and commerce—a better and more harmonious arrangement for the proper utilisation of the skilled services of trained men and women who are absorbed in diverse occupations and careers. In our country unfortunately such co-operation is not at present found in any appreciable measure.

I am moved to make these observations because in recent times there has been a marked tendency to throw a major portion of the blame for the existing state of affairs in this country on the universities and to minimise the importance of the work which has been done by them. There has often been a lamentable want of realisation of the scope for far greater service which the universities, if better equipped and organised, are capable of rendering for the advancement of national prosperity. Whatever reconstruction in the sphere of education might be made in future,—and we readily recognise the vital need of reforms,—it would be nothing short of a national disaster if the prestige and the authority of the university are sought to be curtailed or its influence minimised.

In recent years there have been numerous reports, resolutions and addresses on educational reforms. The criticisms and proposals which have appeared are so varied and formidable that it is often difficult to discover the correct path of action. This province presents for solution problems of educational reconstruction of an unusual complexity. Let us strive and do all that lies in our power to strengthen our foundation, to raise our standard, to revitalise the system and make it respond to the needs of the hour in full accordance with the genius of the people of this country. The time has come when we should sink our differences and inaugurate a new policy of education which will be for the highest good of the largest number of our people. Education offers a field of activity where it is possible for all parties to work in the fullest harmony and co-operation and all must work in that spirit if reforms are to be of any real significance. There must be no conflict of aims and ideals, no arbitrary exercise of authority, no domination of vested interests.

Our ideal is to provide extensive facilities for education from the lowest grade to the highest, to mould our system in such a way as to unify our educational purpose and to draw out the best qualities that lie hidden in our youths and to train them, intellectually, physically and morally, for devoted service in all spheres of national activity—in villages, in towns and in cities. Our ideal is to make the widest provision for a sound liberal education, to find the correct synthesis between cultural education and vocational and technical training, remembering always that no nation can achieve greatness by turning its youth into a mere machine-made product with nothing but a material end in view. Our ideal is to afford the amplest facilities and privileges to our teachers so that they may be endowed with learning, character, and freedom and may regard themselves as not only the torch-bearers and interpreters of knowledge and conquerors of new realms of thought but also as makers of men and women, of leaders and workers, true and brave, upright and patriotic. Our ideal is to link up education with the best elements of our culture and civilization, drawing strength, wherever necessary, from the fountain of Western skill and knowledge. Our ideal is to make our universities and educational institutions the home of liberty and sane and progressive thought,—generously assisted by the State and the public,—where teachers and students will meet and work in an atmosphere

of harmony and mutual understanding, where none will suffer on grounds of caste, sex, creed, and religious or political belief.

I realise we cannot expect to attain this ideal in the immediate future. But what is essential is a searching and systematic examination of our educational needs and the formulation of our ideal. If Bengal is to take a leading part in the task of national reconstruction, the present atmosphere of distrust and suspicion must go for ever. Let us all,—the University, the State and the educated public belonging to all communities,—gather our forces together and combine resolutely, first, to determine the path of future reforms most suited to four environments and national development and, next, to agree to the means for carrying our project into execution.

If Your Excellency, as Chancellor of this University which has been the mouth-piece of the hopes and aspirations of generations of men and women, can help to discover and fulfil the conditions of this united action and lay the foundations for the gigantic task of educational reconstruction, you will be earning the everlasting gratitude of the people of Bengal. Let me conclude by saying that in the formulation of any scheme of reform which is calculated to enhance the well-being of the people and to raise the fame and prestige of our province, which has done so much for the advancement of Indian nationalism, you may always depend upon the ready and spontaneous co-operation not only of the University but of the entire educated public of Bengal.

## The Delhi University Convocation

The following is the full text of the Convocation address delivered by Rai Bahadur Ram Kishore, the Vice Chancellor, at the 14th Convocation of the University of Delhi, held on the 28th March 1936 :—

Mr. Pro-Chancellor, Members of the Court, Ladies and Gentlemen—

It is my duty and also my proud privilege to extend to you all a hearty welcome and particularly to you, Sir, whom the University has the honour to receive here at a Convocation for the first time as its Pro-Chancellor. Your distinguished public services, your long and varied experience as an administrator and statesman, and above all, your keen interest in every progressive movement in the country make us all confident that under your wise guidance and leadership as its Pro-Chancellor the University will rapidly develop its activities and grow to what it was intended to be, a University worthy of the Capital of India.

A few weeks ago we heard with the most profound regret of the death of Lord Reading, the first Chancellor of the University. It was during his regime as Viceroy and Governor-General of India that the idea of a University in this Imperial City was first conceived and as soon as it was established by an Act of the Central Legislature he saw it organised and completely constituted. The high ideal that he set for the University as its Chancellor and the hopes he infused in us by his keen interest in its affairs are recorded in glowing terms in the annals of this institution. I hope you will bear with me if I indulge myself, for a while, in the happy memory of the Convocation held in 1926 in this very hall at which many of you were present. Lord Reading who, as Chancellor of the University, presided on the occasion, was pleased to describe the position of the University and its future in these inspiring words :

"Let me invite you to reflect on the very special position occupied by this University of Imperial Capital of India. It is situated at the head-quarters of the Government of India and at the seat of the Central Legislature. It has an intimate connection with His Majesty the King-Emperor's representative in India, the Viceroy and Governor-General. It takes its name from a place famous in the annals of the past history of India and identified with great traditions of both Hindu and Moslem Empires. It is a link between the ancient lore and culture of India, of which many traces are to be found at Delhi, and the various activities of modern learning, science and research.

"What I hope, and what I believe you all hope, to see in Delhi is a University of which not only Delhi but India as a whole may be justly proud. And how, it may be asked, may this hope be attained? What characteristics should distinguish this

University to mark its special position? What particular aims should it hold before it? In view of its associations, the answer would seem to be that the Delhi University in the first place should give expression to the close concern of the Viceroy and the Governor-General for the moral and intellectual progress of India. It should further be a practical sign of the ultimate responsibility of his Government for the most complete realisation of the best educational ideals in India. It should likewise be a mirror to reflect the ardent desire of the representatives of India in the Central Legislature for the development of her people and the advancement of their capacity and culture to the highest plane. It should diffuse the most powerful influences for the improvement of mental qualities and the strengthening of character. It should be a field of ambition, in which all classes, parties and creeds may labour together in a labour of love, working in harmony in a great public cause."

Ten years have passed since Lord Reading expressed his high hopes about the University in the memorable words I have quoted. It may not be unprofitable, I think, to review and estimate, as briefly as I can, the extent of the progress the University has made since then, and the measure in which it has been able to realise the educational ideal held before it by its first Chancellor. I do not wish to tire your patience by a recital of the visible achievements of the University—the reconstruction and the disposal of its buildings in the beautiful Viceroyal Estate, the arrangements made for the housing and the equipment of its laboratories and library. For, important as they are, buildings and gardens do not make a University, far less do they represent the true educational ideal which it ought to pursue. I shall content myself with a few words about the recent endeavour of the University to formulate its academic policy and to shape its destiny. It is only during the last three years that the University has been able to turn its thoughts in these directions, the first ten years of its life having been spent in a severe struggle for existence which made self-determination practically impossible.

The deep interest now taken by the Government of India in the promotion of higher education in the Capital City of India and, as an earnest of that interest, the transfer of the Old Viceroyal Lodge to the University as its permanent home have assured the University of a continued and useful existence. Thus encouraged, the University is now diligently engaged in studying its problems and requirements as well as making plans for its future development.

In these constructive activities, the advice and assistance of my esteemed friend, Sir George Anderson, the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, have been invaluable. I desire here to make a public acknowledgment on behalf of the University and myself, of the debt of gratitude we owe him for the great services he has rendered to Indian education in general and to this University in particular. He has not only inspired and guided us in our endeavour, but created a better understanding between the Government of India and the University which has resulted in a happy and fruitful co-operation between the two in promoting the interests of higher education in the city of Delhi. It is to him chiefly that we owe the scheme of a federal university the general principles of which have now been adopted by this University. As early as 1933, in the illuminating Convocation address he gave to this University he suggested a solution of the perplexing problem of the relation between an Indian University and its Colleges. "There is, fortunately, a middle path", he said, "between the two extremes: the purely affiliating university, with separate, self-contained and largely autonomous colleges on the one hand, and the centralised unitary university on the other hand. This is the path which the University of Delhi is treading, but it is not easy to define the relations between the University and its colleges".

The idea of a federal university was discussed at some length by His Excellency the Viceroy in his epoch-making address when he opened the third Quinquennial Conference of Indian Universities held in Delhi in March 1934. "Only a University of the federal type", His Excellency said, "can guide and co-ordinate the development of existing colleges so that they shall make their most effective contribution towards the common weal. If only the colleges can be made to realise that this new type of University is intended to supplement, not to supplant their activities, to fulfil and not to destroy the purpose for which colleges exist, they would, I am confident, be prepared to submit, in the large national interest, to the greater measure of control with which a federal university must be invested over its constituents so as to ensure the efficiency both of itself and its colleges".

A few weeks later my learned predecessor, Sir Abdur Rahman, tried to visualize

in his Convocation address a federal university with all its implications and suggested a body of federal law defining, as far as possible, the rights and functions of the University and the colleges respectively. Further thought and frequent discussion by the University authorities on this important subject have not only clarified our ideas of the federal scheme but revealed many difficulties which must be faced before any measure of success can be expected. This scheme depends on two essential conditions. First, there should be complete co-operation between the University and its colleges in teaching and other activities, the colleges being prepared to forego some measure of their autonomy "in order to share in, and contribute to the life and government of the University as a whole". Secondly, in order to make such co-operation effective the colleges should be in close proximity to one another and to the University.

After long and earnest negotiations with the colleges the University has now been able to allay their fears and to persuade them to come to the University site so that they may participate fully in the life and activities of the University. But only one College has the necessary funds for the construction of the required buildings; the rest, unless they are able to dispose of their present buildings profitably, will have to depend chiefly on Government grants which I trust will be available.

I have already referred to the suggestions made at a previous Convocation by my friend and predecessor Sir Abdur Rahman for the enactment of a special body of federal law regulating and controlling the activities of the colleges and the University. The basic federal law is now finally nearing its enactment. Statutes have been drafted defining the relations between the University and the colleges and providing among other things for the proper management of the colleges and their recognition. Recognising the fact the teachers of the University will play the most important role in the federal system, provision has also been made for better conditions of service and more attractive prospects for them. The draft statutes have met with the approval of the Academic and the Executive Council and have been submitted by the latter body to the Court, the supreme authority of the University, for consideration. If they are passed by that body and receive the assent of the Governor-General in Council, as it is hoped they will, the University will have on its Statute Book a body of federal law which will supply the constitutional and legal foundation of the scheme.

The proposal to transfer the colleges to the University site in the Old Viceregal Estate has brought into prominence another problem of considerable difficulty. It has been in our view for some time; but few expected to be confronted with it so soon. For the last few weeks the general proposal for the reconstruction of the system of education in the country has engaged the special attention of the University. I need not here mention all the details of the proposal; but I should like to say a few words on one or two aspects which affect the University vitally. The question of strengthening the school foundations and the stage of admission to the University are inseparably connected. While we welcome the former as an essential condition of efficiency of teaching in the colleges and in the university, the latter seems to be complicated with numerous problems. At the present moment we admit to the University students who have passed the Matriculation or an equivalent examination. They go through a four-years course in two stages of two years each—the Intermediate and the Degree—before they graduate. I am not considering here the post-graduate course of two years which leads to the Master's Degree. The problem before us is: What is going to happen to the Intermediate stage—the two junior classes—when the colleges move to the university site? Are these classes coming with the degree classes to the new site, or are they to be left behind and provided for separately? The opinion of the Government of India seems definitely against the inclusion of the Intermediate classes in the University. In a letter addressed to the Chief Commissioner, Delhi in April 1934 the Government of India expressed their views clearly on this important question. "The administration of the University," it was stated, "should not be overstrained by the imposition of functions which do not ordinarily come within the scope of a university; its teaching resources should not be diverted to the teaching of school children who are as yet unfitted to receive university teaching; the Estate, though spacious, is yet limited in extent and should be reserved as far as possible for university activities." The position of the intermediate classes seems very anomalous indeed. The majority of the students in these classes are immature, both physically and mentally, and ill-equipped and ill-prepared for university education. Their tender age and unformed character need a special treatment which a school ought to provide



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